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I R E L A N D

IN 1868,

THE BATTLE-FIELD FOR ENGLISH PARTY STRIFE;

ITS

GRIEVANCES, REAL AND FACTITIOUS;

REMEDIES, ABORTIVE OR MISCHIEVOUS:

CONFINED TO

The Church Question.

BY

GERALD FITZGIBBON, ESQ.,

ONE OF THE MASTERS IN CHANCERY IN IRELAND.

Semper ego auditor tantum?

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IRELAND IN 1868,

&c., &c.

THE Reform Bill having occupied the attention of Parliament during the session of 1867-68, it was generally assumed that the party whose shibboleth is "Justice for Ireland" would make a claim on the subsequent session for paramount attention to the business of investigating the wrongs by which they allege that a large debt of good government is withheld from the Irish people. The Fenian atrocities committed in England, and even in London, roused unusual attention to the assertions of those who ascribed that conspiracy to the discontent which, they assert, is provoked by misrule, in Ireland. The disaffection (of which this conspiracy was taken as a proof) was believed, in England, to be the pervading temper of the whole Irish race. When those who assume to be the apologists and defenders of what they call the Irish people imputed this disaffection to the tyranny of a dominant faction of Protestants, they found the English public credulous, because no other cause for it was known in England. The disaffection was not only thus ascribed to a wrong cause, but its extent was exaggerated beyond all measure. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was urged, and was taken as a proof that Ireland was in a state of insurrection, and that legislative intervention was urgently demanded. Those who called for this intervention were allowed to dictate the subjects upon which the power of legislation was to be exercised. The Roman Catholic clergy complained on the subject of education, both primary and collegiate, and also upon the subject of the State Church. The existing law of land tenure was the other great subject of complaint. Believing that Irish poverty, discontent, and disaffection (where disaffection at all

existed) had no connexion whatever with education, with the State Church, or with the law of tenure—and that the ignorance, and consequent credulity, of the English people upon these subjects had been cruelly abused—I was prompted by a natural feeling to become a witness of the truth, and I published a book in which each of the subjects of proposed legislation for Ireland is discussed: how discussed, and with what force, must be learned from the book itself.

To the English party in Opposition, the Church question alone presented a tempting issue on which to provoke a contest with the Ministry.

Convinced that Ireland's chance of peace and prosperity was bound up with the fate of the Ministry on this question, my views upon it are, perhaps, too diffusely expressed throughout the book. Dealing, as I did, and as I intended to do, with all the asserted grievances which England was called on to redress—and calling attention also to some grievances which, however injuriously operative, are yet entirely unnoticed—the work ran to a length which must diminish its circulation. Many men of distinction, to whom I was wholly unknown, except as the writer of this volume, have expressed regret that what it contains on the Church question, to which the public attention is now confined, was not at this crisis separately offered to the public, unconnected with the other topics, from which attention is at present withdrawn.

In deference to the feeling so expressed, and believing it to be my duty, as I have spoken at all, to speak as audibly as I can upon that most important question, I have extracted these pages from the larger book, and now present them to the public, with the earnest assurance, that no man in the community, high or low, has a smaller personal interest at stake in party contests than I have. As the leaders of Opposition, and all their organs of the Press, have concentrated their forces to sustain their attack upon the Church, it behoves the defenders also of this great national institution to confine the public attention to the point assailed.

The first chapter of the book on “Ireland in 1868” points out the causes of poverty, agitation, and discontent in Ireland; and the real discontent produced by penury is distinguished from the factious discontent of classes which have no poverty, or other grievance to complain of. It is denied, that governors, or legislators have power to remedy evils which flow solely from inveterate habits of the people, and from moral causes which no legislation, applicable to a free country, can remove.

The second chapter discusses the complaint against the ancient Protestant University, and the claim of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to have a University chartered and endowed for them, by the State, and placed under their exclusive government, for the education of the youth in the higher ranks of their own laity, and shows that this is a purely clerical demand, unsupported by—and as much against the wishes of—the Roman Catholic gentry, as it is opposed to the true social policy of a tolerant government.

The third chapter enters largely, and historically, into the tortured question of National Education, in Ireland, and points out the necessary and mischievous consequences of the effort to combine religious with secular instruction, in schools intended for children of all creeds. It demonstrates, by reasoning *a priori*, as well as by the results of the long trial that has been made, that this combination of religious with secular instruction is wholly incompatible with the benevolent design of attracting the children of different persuasions to one common school, in which sectarian aversions may be displaced by the promotion of affectionate intercourse in the rising generation.

The fourth chapter treats of the subject of legislative interference with the contracts and relations between landlord and tenant, and is an effort to show, that such interference cannot produce any useful effects, and that any special law of tenure for Ireland must either violate the rights of property, or be so complicated as to deter all parties from attempting to act under it—proved by the elaborate experiment, already made, by the Act of 1860, which remains a mere dead letter on the Statute Book.

The fifth and longest chapter is that which I have been urged to publish separately. The first pages of this chapter give a traditional account (corroborated by Acts of Parliament and other evidences) of the wretched condition of man and beast in Ireland, consequent on the social habits of the people, up to the close of the last century. By the unquestionable facts related in this chapter, it is conclusively proved, that while the whole population remained below two millions and a half, the poor were annually decimated by constantly recurring famine; that notwithstanding the perils and the hardships of the sea, before the invention of steam-power, the exodus from Ireland, in the first half of the last century, was as great, and probably greater, in proportion to the population, than it is now, while it was incomparably more painful and disastrous to the emigrants. It is remarkable, also, that the rage for this emigration, in the last century, chiefly prevailed in the north of

Ireland, and amongst the colonists—the English Protestants, and Scotch Presbyterians—who, and whose descendants, are now accused of being the tyrannical cause of Irish discontent. After giving a traditional account of the deplorable ignorance and sloth which constituted Irish nationality, the chapter then proceeds as follows :—

These are a few specimens, and only a few, of the agricultural skill and social habits of the Irish people, not imported by the English intruders, but forming a part of the nationality which the British Legislature is called upon to restore to Ireland, in which this nationality flourished before an English foot was set upon the island.

If nationality means anything, it must mean an assemblage of those things which are peculiar to, and pervade one section of the human race, to which the name of nation is given : such as to inhabit a defined country : to speak a common language : to wear a peculiar dress : to relish certain kinds of food, cooked according to a pervading national taste : to live in houses, with or without windows, or chimneys, or burrowed in the ground, like the Armenians described by Xenophon, &c. It would be well to call upon some eloquent Irish patriot to specify some time, in the authentic history of Ireland, and to group the social habits peculiar to the Irish, and constituting, at that time, the nationality which he would now restore to the Irish people. If I mistake not, this would be an embarrassing requisition.

That a fertile country, so inhabited as Ireland was, according to every tradition which exists of the aboriginal people, should attract invaders, no one can be surprised. That it was defenceless is conclusively proved by the success of Strongbow's descent, with a force almost as contemptible, in modern eyes, as the Fenian army which was encountered, and put to flight by a few policemen, last year, within a mile of my country house.

The wars, and rebellions; the cruelties, and oppressions which ensued; the spoliations, and seizures of property; the forfeitures of land by original owners; and the grants made to their invaders, were nothing different, in kind, and were less, in degree, than the wrongs of the same character suffered by every nation in Europe, during those centuries which followed the ruin of the Roman empire, and ended in the final settlement now established in the western continent of Europe.

The Britons were invaded, slaughtered, or enslaved by the Saxons, except the few who escaped into Wales. The victorious Saxons were plundered, worried and tortured by the Danes, who intruded, and forced a tyrannical settlement amongst them. The united Saxons and

Danes were, in their turn, subdued by the Normans, and despoiled of their lands, their goods, and their liberty.

A succession of wars, invasions, and cruelties, may be enumerated in every country in Europe, from the fourth to the seventeenth century. The present generation are no more answerable for those inflicted on Ireland than on any other nation. Justice no more demands that we should trace out the aboriginal Irish, and restore to them their language, their country, and what is called their nationality, than it prompts us to perform the same service towards the Britons, the Scots, and the Picts. The aboriginal Irish race is not as distinct, and as unmixed with the blood of the invaders, as the Britons, who now live happy, and contented in Wales. The ancient social happiness, civilization, and prosperity of Ireland, and its inhabitants, assumed by professing patriots, is purely mythical. The present condition of the people is grossly misrepresented; and their so-called degradation and penury unscrupulously exaggerated. What is alleged of their former prosperity, from which it is asserted they have been degraded, is certainly not recorded in any authentic history, anterior to the invasion of Strongbow, in the twelfth century. It will be vain to search for it, at any later period, before the present century. What their actual condition was, from the earliest time to which it can now be traced back, with any truth, has been already described.*

But suppose the Irish nation, before it was subdued by invaders, had been wealthy, civilized, and happy; and assuming that it was reduced by the violence and cruelty of conquerors, and of barbarous conquerors, in those turbulent times, from a state of the utmost felicity to the very depths of human misery (which was the case of all the Roman provinces in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries), does that constitute any right or title, at the present day, when peace has been long restored, and after the lapse of seven hundred years, to break up the settled order of things, and to take away from the present owners, even when known to be descended from original wrong-doers, the property and rights which they have inherited, in order to restore them to the descendants of those from whom they were taken, or for any other purpose whatever? Thus, to abrogate the pacifying effects of time, even in the case here assumed, would be but a repetition of cruelty and injustice, and must work intolerable mischief to civilized society, and be utterly destructive of security and social happiness.

* This description is in the omitted part of Chap. V., pp. 133-154.

In a great many cases, property and rights, as they now stand, have been honestly and peaceably acquired by the present owners, who derived nothing of them from their ancestors, and who have nothing, and claim nothing, which was not purchased, or acquired by their own peaceful labour. In a great multitude of cases also, where property has been inherited, it was originally acquired by those from whom the title is derived, not by conquest, or violence, but by peaceful industry and thrift; and many who so acquired, and now possess it, are the descendants of those who had been conquered, and despoiled; and many who would now claim it are descended from the spoliators.

If the aboriginal Irish were still a distinct race, wholly unmixed, in blood, with the posterity of their invaders (which they certainly are not), the cry of "Ireland for the Irish," now set up by the discontented and seditious, would, even in that case, be raised in opposition to the soundest and best established principles of peace and social order. It is a cry, raised for no honest purpose, and has no other tendency than to excite, in the labouring poor, who must ever be the most numerous part of every nation, feelings of envy and hostility towards the rich and prosperous, on whose knowledge and guidance, and upon whose envied wealth also, the safety of the poor themselves depends. In nine hundred and ninety-nine of every thousand cases, the Irish who are now poor and destitute are the descendants of ancestors who were, from the earliest time to which they can be traced, more destitute and wretched than any of the present generation.

Up to the invasion of the American continent by the European races, it had been in the undisputed possession of the Indian tribes. It was their country, in the fullest sense, by the clear title of immemorial possession; and had they the power to defend their country, and their nationality, every principle of patriotism and justice would have warranted the use of that power. Wanting the power, which by natural law nothing but civilization can give, they were conquered; they were slaughtered; they were enslaved, tortured, and driven from their native forests by force, and by fraud. They are still a pure and unmixed nation, wholly distinct from all the races who have expelled them. When some of these ruthless spoliators of the unoffending Indians cry "Ireland for the Irish," it seems strange that they should not see how much more strongly and clearly the same principle will demand the whole American continent for the Indians—an *argumentum ad absurdum* the force of which, I presume, no citizen of the States will deny, or question.

The wandering hunters, and savage tribes, in whom the best facul-

ties of the human mind were left dormant, and uncultivated, as a natural and necessary consequence, wanted the power to defend their country from more civilized and powerful invaders, actuated by selfish instincts, which pity for the helpless has never, in any age of the world, been able to control. What justice would there be in taking from the present owners the lands which they and their forefathers, according to God's law, subdued, cleared, and cultivated; and replenished, in obedience to that law. To take from them the cities, and the houses which they built; the fields which they cultivated, and all the other improvements which they made, with infinite toil, and skilful art; to turn all back into a wild and dreary forest, and deliver it up to the Indian tribes, for space to hunt in, and to live naked and exposed, or with no covering but the skins of their prey, and no shelter but the wigwam, according to their nationality. Their nationality consists in neglecting the faculties for association and political union which Providence has given them, and in disobedience to God's command, to increase and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. Such a revolution is not suggested by any natural instinct, or warranted by any principle of reason or justice.

Three centuries ago, Ireland was covered with forests, bogs, and morasses, and was as different from Ireland of the present day, as the American wilderness was from the modern States. It had not been reclaimed from that disgraceful condition by the cattle farmers, who lived in sloth, and slept with their cows and their pigs, in dark and noisome dens : whose nationality demanded desolate tracts of pasture land for their cattle, to the exclusion of civilized and industrious men. To demand Ireland for the descendants of this aboriginal race, and to claim a restoration of their nationality, is to insist that the country should be again turned into a howling wilderness.

Improvements of incalculable value have been made upon the surface of Ireland, within living memory, and in numberless instances by the present owners of the soil; those who talk of disturbing, or meddling with the rights of these owners, by legislation, must be forgetful of authentic history, heedless of the unalterable laws by which the universe is governed, and deaf to all the suggestions of justice, of reason, and of common sense. Those who talk of invading this property, with pikes and guns in their hands, speak intelligibly, and the honest owners have no difficulty in determining what to do.

But when men, armed with the power of legislation, threaten to do justice to Ireland, by empirical enactments, subversive of existing

rights, devised for sectarian and party purposes, and conceded to turbulence and agitation, we cannot be surprised at the feelings of uneasiness, and alarm which prevail in all the classes of Irish society who love order, and have anything to lose. Against this kind of invasion of their property and rights, honest, peaceful, and industrious men feel that they are defenceless.

No resolute, reflecting man, in Ireland, has the least fear of danger from the Fenians. If we can imagine some hundreds of wolves, getting over from the forests of America, and craftily landing in different parts of England, and Ireland, and there making their appearance in prowling packs, and stealthily attacking property and life, wherever they find them insufficiently guarded; and having made some successful snatches, then slinking into obscure holes and corners, and cunningly evading detection, those packs of mere wolves would excite the sort of alarm which, at present, exists in Ireland, at the appearance and doings of the Fenian packs, who have been so closely imitating the savage brutes which, two or three centuries ago, kept peaceful men on the alert to guard their flocks, their children, and their lives, from the prowlers of the forest. The Fenians differ from wolves, in the faculty of human language, by which, when captured and convicted, they can make plausible speeches, and profess ardent love for the Irish people, whom they address, as the wolves in the fable addressed the sheep, when they would persuade them to expel their dogs, and to rely on the protection, and love, and patriotic kindness, of their professing friends, of whose services they were deprived by the dogs.

That these lurking spoliators will be speedily, and effectually exterminated, no rational man has any doubt: that hunting them, capturing them, hanging, or caging them can ever be regarded by civilized citizens of the United States, as any infringement of international law, is not to be seriously apprehended for a moment. If we could imagine anything so absurd as the interference of Congress with the right of England to punish and expel these marauders, we should be forced to the conclusion, that America had determined to provoke, and to face, the hostility of all the civilized nations of the world. From the Fenians, therefore, or their abettors in America, no reasoning man apprehends any serious or lasting obstacle to the material prosperity of Ireland.

It is from a session of Parliament, devoted to the discussion and redress of the so-called grievances of the country, that obstacles to improvement, and danger to property and peace, are seriously to be feared.

From this source we have had already many calamities inflicted upon Ireland, in the mistaken belief that the Legislature was acting the part of a physician, and administering a remedy for existing disorders.

It is not easy to imagine a stronger or more lucid instance, in proof of this assertion, than the Charter of the last century, so benevolently solicited, and so credulously granted, for the education, the improvement, and the spiritual salvation of the Irish. During ninety years, under the operation of this expensive remedy, 12·749 of the children admitted into the Charter Schools survived the cruel treatment administered in those abodes of misery, desolation, and woe, and escaped from them, not to freedom, but still in bondage to mercenary masters, willing to undertake the training and management of starved, ragged, sullen, and dogged wretches, to whom their probation, in those purgatories, was an indelible disgrace, and the bitterest reproach that could be uttered. How many thousands of the hapless children, who entered these falsely called asylums, perished by the treatment and torture inflicted on them, before they attained the age of apprenticeship, there is no record, or means of now discovering. How many hundreds, or thousands, absconded from them, in those ninety years, and to what final doom those demoralized, and helpless fugitives were destined, without home, without kindred, without heart, or other feelings towards their fellow-men, than the savage inflictions which had scared them from the schools must have engendered in their breasts, there are now no means of discovering. It is equally impossible to ascertain how many of the 12·749 apprentices absconded from the cruelty of ferocious masters, or how many of them escaped from bondage, to die on the gallows; or how many of those who did not abscond, survived the training, during the years of bondage to masters who had received them from no other motive than hope of profit from the labour which they could extort from these bounden slaves. It is ascertained that only one, in every eleven of the apprentices, completed his servitude, and married Protestant!!*

The infliction of those Charter Schools upon the country was meant to remedy the so-called grievance of devotion to the Roman Catholic religion. If those who would keep their Roman Catholic flocks within the fold by the fear of eternal punishment, as the consequence of leaving it, desired an illustration, by the judgments falling, even in this

* For the history of these schools, and the treatment of the children, see the book, from p. 92 to 102.

life, upon those who yielded to the temptations to leave that fold, they had, in all parts of Ireland, the poor, starved, tortured, sickly, and sullen proselytes, who were enduring an earthly purgatory in the Charter Schools, as examples, and truly terrifying examples, under the eyes of those who remained steadfast, and who, notwithstanding their rags, and their poverty, were still—according to the Rev. Mr. Lee's observation—healthy, vivacious, and intelligent children, free as the birds of the air, with the world before them, and unimpaired faculties to encounter it; with homes, however humble, to shelter them, affectionate kindred, to aid and to cheer them, and free from stigma or reproach of any kind. Taking the contrast, as described even by Mr. Lee, the panegyrist of the Charter Schools, what a barrier must these institutions have been to the accomplishment of the very purpose for which they were erected, and for ninety years, expensively, and blindly maintained!!

The operation and obvious effect of these schools, and the cruelty of maintaining them, were exposed to the Irish Parliament by Howard, in 1788, forty years before they were abolished; during which forty years, there was no effectual attempt to reform them, or to mitigate their withering effect upon the established religion of the State. The clergy and laity of that State religion are now taunted, and rebuked for being still a minority of the nation. The same legislative power which was thus, for ninety years, exercised to make the propagation of the reformed religion impossible in this country, is now called upon to abolish the Established Church, because it is still confined to a minority of the people, and because it did not perform what the Legislature itself had made impossible.

It is not alone the institution of the Charter Schools, and the manner of conducting them, but all the other State measures of the last three centuries, for suppressing the Roman Catholic religion, and propagating the Protestant faith, in Ireland, although intended, and, no doubt, sincerely intended, to accomplish that object, were so taken, and so conducted, as to produce effects diametrically opposite to those aimed at, and desired. The penal laws, by which the reformed religion was effectually propagated, and the Romish religion suppressed in England, did not extend to Ireland, and no such laws were there enacted, until several years after the Revolution of 1688. The adoption, or rejection of the reformed religion was, in Ireland, left to the free choice of both the Irish and English races. Even the option of embracing it was not given to the Irish race; for very few of them un-

derstood the English language ; and no one ever spoke to them, or preached to them in their own language, on the subject of religion, except their own priests. They were left entirely in the hands, and under the instructions of these, who were all Irish, and hostile to the reformed religion, not only because they condemned it, as a heresy, but because they and their flocks hated it, as the creed of their English enemies. The very word which signified Protestant, also signified Englishman ; there was no other Irish word for either, but *Sassanagh*, which, to the present day, means a Protestant, as well as Englishman. After allowing free liberty to the Roman Catholic clergy, for 140 years, in the Irish tongue (the most expressive spoken on earth), to abuse the Protestant religion, and to confirm the Irish in the old faith, two most absurd and cruel penal Acts were passed, in 1695, followed by others, passed afterwards, at such times, and under such circumstances, and so administered, as to make the Roman Catholics of Ireland cling to the ancient faith, with proud and defiant tenacity. When these laws were found to be as imbecile, as they were cruel and absurd, they were relaxed ; but, at every stage, tardily, and reluctantly relaxed. Having ignored, with stolid stupidity, the strongest arguments of reason, and rejected, with insult, the petitions of unjustly oppressed subjects, the same men relaxed the penal laws, when assailed by bold and seditious agitation. The governing power, which was strong as adamant against reason and justice, was yielding as a reed, when boldly assailed ; demonstrating, that nothing would be conceded to prayers and petitions, however supported by every principle of justice, reason, and humanity ; and that anything, and everything would be surrendered to turbulent agitation, and threats of physical force.

For more than two years before 1792, the Roman Catholics refrained from agitation : and, by every demonstration of orderly and peaceable conduct, proved their title to relief. On the 8th, and 13th February, 1792, they humbly petitioned for repeal of some of the most absurd of the tyrannical enactments in the penal code inflicted on them since the Revolution. The petitions were rejected, scornfully and promptly, on the 20th February, by a majority of 208 to 25. The Catholics, immediately, began to form associations, and to agitate. A convention of delegates was organized, a bolder tone was assumed, and grew more minacious, as the pressure of a French war emboldened them. The same Government, and the same Legislature, by which the dutiful petitions had been rejected in February, with a majority of ten to one against them, before the end of the same year, gave a large measure of relief,

by the Act 32 Geo. III., c. 21; and being further pressed by agitation, and threats of sedition, they, in 1793, passed the great relief Act, which gave the Catholics the elective franchise; which Act begins with a recital, that it was granted "from the peaceable and loyal demeanour of His Majesty's Popish or Roman Catholic subjects;" which preamble every Roman Catholic in the nation must have derided, as a false and hypocritical pretence; they must have known, that it had been extorted from the fears of a quailing Government and Legislature, who had disregarded, and insulted peaceable and loyal demeanour, when it really existed.

During the long struggle for perfect emancipation, a large, intelligent, and earnest section of Protestants (in which denomination I include all who dissent from the Roman Catholic faith) heartily joined in every constitutional effort for the restoration of their fellow-subjects to the liberty which was their birth-right, and to which their title was clear, as soon as they ceased to fight for the domination of an intolerant hierarchy. The feelings of the liberal Protestants were, from time to time, eloquently expressed by many of their able representatives in Parliament. When, at last, justice appeared to have triumphed, by legitimate means, and was, by one House, conceded to constitutional entreaty, the salutary and sedative effect of the wise concession was not only defeated, but by a fatal resolution of the other House, was turned into a maddening stimulus to the agitation and violence which experience had proved to be the only means of succeeding. These means were promptly resorted to; and these means succeeded in 1829—four years after concession to constitutional petitions, and convincing argument had been refused. In 1830, the Reformers of England, profiting by the lesson thus given, determined to adopt threats, in place of arguments, to support their petitions for reform. Then it was that the clubs and coffee-houses of London heard of armed thousands prepared to march upon them from Birmingham, and other places. The men who had answered clear proof of existing abuses by a bald denial, and conclusive arguments for the necessity of reformation, by a peremptory refusal of all reform, speedily yielded, and the Reform Act was passed in 1832. No reasoning man can be surprised, that agitation, and minacious vapouring about physical force have become the established method of supporting every demand upon the attention of the Legislature.

The country is now at a crisis, in all essential particulars, similar to that which was passed through, by the wrong road of concession, in

1829. On the method of dealing with it, whether by conservative firmness, or yielding timidity, must depend the future peace and progress of Ireland.

The Fenians, despicable as they are, have threatened to overturn, by force of arms, the long-established, and well-fortified throne of England. Alarmed at this threat, and yielding to the mischievous atrocities, and absurd audacity of these imbecile and vicious conspirators, timid politicians countenance proposals to give up the Protestant Church of Ireland, as a sop to pacify the clamour which alarms them. The party in office have declared their reluctance to sacrifice this institution; some of them have avowed their resolution to uphold it; and thus what appears to be a favourable opportunity is presented of raising an issue upon which the party in opposition may achieve a victory, and, by manœuvre, take the place of the present Ministry—upon a pretext of doing justice to Ireland.

Unhappy Ireland is made the battle-field of this party strife. Victory being the sole object of the leaders, civil rights, and religious and municipal institutions are no more to be spared, when they come, as obstacles in the way of a skilful manœuvre, than corn fields, gardens, houses, or churches, when the general of an army sees them obstructing a junction of forces, or any other military movement. The artillery is commanded to batter down, and level the church, and the house; the pioneers are ordered to prostrate the fences of the corn field, and the garden; to fell and to devastate, and sweep away the erections of industry and skill, and have no regard to anything but the free passage of the moving column, in its march to victory.

When the thing to be thus prostrated is the State Church of a sister kingdom, by solemn compact firmly, and, as was for 300 years believed, indissolubly united, for weal or for woe, with the Crown; and now, for sixty-eight years, also united with its powerful ally, the Church of England; when an institution established for the religious instruction and public worship of 700,000 Christians, is the thing to be abolished, after surviving the warring elements of 300 years; and when the property set apart and granted for support of this religious Establishment is to be confiscated, some consideration is obviously due to its history, and to the political and social purposes for which it was established, and firmly united to the Throne.

On the principles which led to, and which justified the Reformation, in the sixteenth century, and made England a Protestant nation, and which also led to, and justified the Revolution of 1688, the State Church of

Ireland rests ; and, as long as those principles are respected by the English people, the bond of union between this Church and the Throne of the United Kingdom should be inviolably maintained. This bond is now assailed by the Roman Catholic hierarchy as a grievance to them, and to their congregations. Certain members of rank and position in the Roman Catholic laity have made a declaration, that they feel the existence of the State Church to be a grievance ; but beyond the bare assertion of this sentiment, they give no reasons for so feeling. When the title of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and laity of the present time to complain of the State Church of Ireland, as a grievance, is to be estimated, the part which the Roman Catholic hierarchy and laity of 1688 took in the contests of that time, and the doctrinal differences which led to the Reformation, and the Revolution, should never be forgotten. In estimating the title of the same parties to the fullest measure of toleration, and to the most perfect social equality, there should be entire oblivion of by-gone wars and controversies, and differences of creed should be ignored.

Whether the Protestant religion is a heresy, and its doctrines heterodox, and whether the Roman Catholic religion is the only true religion, and its doctrines alone are orthodox, are theological questions with which I have no intention to meddle, and which are distinct from, and have nothing to do with the purely secular question, whether the Established Church of Ireland is to be maintained, as a protection to liberty, or abolished, as a social grievance. When I state the difference, operative upon social rights, between the doctrine of the Protestant Church, and the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, I am expressing no opinion on the question, which of them is theologically right or wrong.

There is no necessity for erudition, or extensive reading, to discover what that operative difference is—the school-boy's Catechism of each Church makes it conspicuously visible. In the Roman Catholic Catechism it is dogmatically, and, *ex cathedra*, laid down as doctrine necessary to salvation, “ that true Christians are to be found only in the true Church ”—“ that the true Church is the holy Catholic Church ”—“ that there is no other true Church besides the holy Catholic Church, because there is but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, so there is but one true Church ”—“ that every body is obliged to be of the true Church—and that no one can be saved out of it ”—“ that the Pope is the visible head of the Church, and is Christ's Vicar on earth, and supreme head of the Church ”—“ that one of the advantages enjoyed in the true Church is the forgiveness of

sins," and that this means, " that Christ left to the Pastors of His Church the power of *forgiving* sins;"—" that when any one falls into mortal sin (the greatest of all misfortunes), he must repent sincerely, and go to confession, as soon as possible, that he may recover God's friendship, and be always prepared to die"—" that souls in purgatory can be relieved by our prayers—and that it is by the authority of the Church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, that we can know with certainty what God has taught."

If all mankind be obliged to be of the true Church, it is but an easy step to the conclusion, that the clergy have a right to enforce that obligation; and they, in plain and positive terms, assert that they have been appointed by Divine Providence to guard this faith, and that they are answerable to God for the souls of men.* The obligation to be of this true Church, or of any other than the Church of their own choice, Protestants of the Church of England deny. Against the assumption of divine right, to guard the faith of men on earth; and against the pretence of responsibility to God for human souls, those of the reformed religion protest. They further repudiate the obligation to go to confession; and they do not believe that the pastor has the power of forgiving sins, upon condition of repentance, or on any other terms whatever. They also deny, and wholly disbelieve, that the souls of the dead can be relieved from purgatory by the prayers of the living, or even by the masses of the clergy; and they thus dry up the greatest sources of priestly power on earth, and priestly dominion over the minds, and religious fears of their congregations.

In the Catechism of the Church of England there is not one word intolerant of any other creed; not one word upon which a claim to priestly power could be founded; not one word to countenance an assertion that the pastor has any colour of right to enforce, otherwise than by reason and persuasion, the obligation of belonging to his Church, or that any such obligation exists, independently of free choice, prompted by reason.

* At a meeting of the Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops, held on the 21st January, 1826, one of the resolutions passed was in the following terms:—"RESOLVED,—That appointed, as we have been, by Divine Providence, to watch over and preserve the deposit of Catholic faith, in Ireland, and responsible, as we are, to God for the souls of our flocks, we will, in our respective dioceses, withhold our concurrence and support from any system of education which will not fully accord with the principles expressed in the foregoing resolutions." This resolution is quoted in the chapter on National Education, at page 61 of the book. It contains a clerical assertion of divine right, inconsistent with the rational liberty of the human race, and repudiated by all reflecting Protestants.

When I thus simply, and without commentary, state the catechetical teaching of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, I do not say that their teaching is theologically wrong. When I state that the Protestant hierarchy eschew such teaching, I do not say that they are theologically right. When I assert that Protestants repudiate the Roman Catholic Catechism, and the asserted dogma that all are obliged to belong to that Church, I only state a fact; I do not deny to the Roman Catholic clergy the liberty minaciously to say, that Protestants do this at their own peril; I only say that they do it, and feel no apprehension of God's anger, when thus using the faculties of reason which God has given them; and that, as one of them, I do it; and, for myself, I add, that when I cease to have free liberty to do it, I hope I may cease to live.

When James the Second ascended the throne, having previously renounced the Protestant religion, and declared himself a member of the Romish Church, and acknowledged its doctrines and catechetical dogmas, his title to the crown was still admitted by his Protestant subjects, notwithstanding his apostacy. It soon became manifest that a union between the temporal Sovereign and the Papal clergy was incompatible with toleration of any but what they dogmatically asserted to be the only true religion; and equally manifest that the open violation (which the king commanded) of the laws enacted by Protestants, for their protection against the ferocious persecutions inflicted on them, when the same union had taken place before, in the reign of Mary, would soon come to a repetition of the same inflictions. The nation soon discovered that when the secular sovereign had submitted to the spiritual jurisdiction of those who claimed it by appointment from Divine Providence, the organized and armed force placed under his command would be prostituted to enforce the obligation of belonging to the only true Church, as then was, and as now is explicitly imposed upon all by the authority of that Church, and emphatically expressed in its Catechism. When, by the just rage of his subjects, this tyrannical bigot was forced to fly, he took shelter under the French king, who was engaged in the congenial work of persecuting his own Protestant subjects, of whom, after revoking the edict of Nantz, he had, by cruel persecution, expatriated half a million; and of these 50,000 had taken refuge in England.

By the aid of that most powerful of England's enemies, James was enabled to try the question between himself and his English and Scotch subjects by force of arms. For that great trial he selected Ireland as his battle-field.

If the estimate of Sir William Petty, made in 1672, be correct, there were, in Ireland, at that time, and probably also at the time of the Revolution, about 100,000 legal Protestants and Conformists; about the same number of Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers, of the English race, and 100,000 Scotch Presbyterians. All the rest of the population, about 800,000 in number, were Roman Catholics, like James himself, and ready, as he believed, to fight his battle.

Having safely landed in Ireland, he marshalled his forces, French and Irish, and proceeded to trample down the Protestants, who appeared to be no match for his superior numbers. How this brave minority stood at bay—how they baffled him, at Derry and other places—how they rallied round his successor, and gained the victory, I hope will never be forgotten by the English people, or by any one who values civil liberty, no matter what may be his country, his party, or his creed. That was not a battle to determine theological differences; it was a contest for freedom of speech, freedom of action, freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and protection against the ferocious bigots, who, by the rack and the gibbet, had driven the most loyal and duty-loving subjects on earth to expel their hereditary and lawful Sovereign. It became, also, a contest between England and France for the Sovereignty, and the possession of Ireland. When that mortal strife was ended, and when the victory was won by those who fought for, and who vindicated, the rights, and the liberties of the human race against those who would trample them down; and when the government of Ireland came to be settled, according to the principles of civil liberty, and religious toleration, by the elected King of the United Kingdom, and his Protestant subjects, to whom were that King, and those Protestants to entrust the care and defence of the kingdom which they had rescued from the most powerful enemy that England ever had? The Pope, and the Papal hierarchy, to a man, were on the side of Louis and his cruel, and bigoted tool. The Protestants of Ireland, to a man, were marshalled on the side of England, and fought, and bled for the English cause, and for maintaining their political, and social union with the English people. When William, and his Protestant subjects had to select a State Church for Ireland, what other could they choose than that on which the hundred thousand loyal and faithful Protestants then depended, and on which 700,000 loyal, and tolerant Protestants now depend, for public worship and for spiritual instruction? The property set apart for the mainte-

nance of religion was, then, and had been, for more than a century before, in the possession of the Irish Reformed Church, and was not at the disposal of the Crown. Was any part of it to be taken from that Church, and given to support a hierarchy who had just been defeated in their efforts to dethrone the new King? The Crown and the Legislature, long previously, had allocated that property to support a Church, whose doctrines were not only consistent with, but powerfully ancillary to, the progress of freedom and toleration in the civilized world. To whom was that property to be secured, other than the hundred thousand loyal subjects, for whose religious uses, and the maintenance of whose worship, it had been appropriated, and vested in their clergy, more than a century before, and by whose aid and faithful, and loyal services it had been just rescued from the grasp of the King's enemies, and the enemies of British liberty, and of the English nation.

It is a mistake to assume, that the Church property was granted to the Protestant clergy, in the sense that property is granted to individual subjects. It was granted to them, in the same sense, and upon the same trusts, that the church buildings, and churchyards were granted to them, and legally vested in them—for the use and benefit of the Protestant people of Ireland, in the maintenance of their religion, and for affording them the means of public worship, according to their religious opinions, and conscientious convictions.

When this property, before and at the Revolution, was thus appropriated and set apart for the maintenance of an independent clergy, and to support the Protestant religion in Ireland, there were of Church of England Protestants only 100,000, men, women, and children, which to the entire residue of the people bore the ratio of one to ten, and, to the Irish Roman Catholics, the ratio of one to eight. The descendants of those Protestants, and those who belong to their body at the present day, at the last census numbered nearly 700,000; therefore they now bear to the rest of the people the ratio of one to seven, and to the *Roman Catholics*, one to six and a half. The assailants of the Irish Church have asserted, that the Protestants of Ireland now bear a smaller ratio to the Roman Catholics than they bore at the Revolution; and they support this assertion by reference to the estimate of the population, in 1672, made by Sir William Petty. According to this authority, there were then in Ireland 100,000 Protestants of the Church of England; 100,000 Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers, *of the English race*; 100,000 Scotch Presbyterians, and 800,000 Irish, who were all Roman Catholics. By adding together

the Church of England Protestants and the Scotch Presbyterians, and calling the aggregate number Protestants, these, *together*, bore a ratio to the Roman Catholics of one to four, in 1672. By *separating the Church of England Protestants from Presbyterians* in 1868, and comparing *them alone* with the Roman Catholics of 1868, the ratio is one to six and a half, and, therefore, less than one to four, the ratio of *both* sects of Protestants to the Roman Catholics in 1672. It is difficult to believe that men who have ability to compute at all, can be blind to the gross sophistry of combining the two sects when they want to swell the ratio, and of separating them when it serves their purpose to diminish it. The Church of England Protestants of 1868 are seven to one of the Protestants in 1672. The Roman Catholics of 1868 are only five and a half to one of those in 1672, and have, therefore, increased in a less proportion than the Protestants, and bear a less ratio now to the Protestants, than they did in 1672. The Presbyterians and other Protestant sects, English and Scotch, in 1672, were 200,000, and were, therefore, to the Roman Catholics of that time as one to four. The distinction between English and Scotch Presbyterians has long ceased to exist, and the Presbyterians of both races are now only 585,000; and, together with all the dissenters in Ireland, are less than one to six and a half of Roman Catholics; whereas in 1672 they were as one to four Roman Catholics, and thus *their* ratio has greatly diminished, while that of the Church of England Protestants has very substantially increased. If the Presbyterians and the Dissenters classed with them had, since 1672, increased in the same proportion as the Church of England Protestants have, they would be now 1,400,000; whereas they are below one half that number. This falling off in *their* increase was caused by the great emigration mentioned by Primate Boulter in his letters, 1727-1737, which he states was confined to the north of Ireland, and to the Protestants *there*, who were principally *Presbyterians*. The emigration continued for nearly fifty years, and, no doubt, checked the increase of the Presbyterians, from which sect the colonists of New England were chiefly derived.

Had the property then appropriated to maintain religious worship for 100,000 persons remained unaltered by modern commutation, and adjustment, it would now be, as the Protestant people are, about seven times what it was at the Revolution. The English Sovereign, and the English Lords and Commons, are now called upon to act with marvellous inconsistency, when they are solicited to take away from 700,000 people what remains of the property that was granted to serve the

same uses, in respect of 100,000, the total number who existed at the time of the grant. They are called on to do this act of injustice, and to inflict this forfeiture, in order to obliterate what is termed a memorial of conquest. Rationally considered, that was not a conquest and victory of Protestants over Roman Catholics, or of English over Irish ; it was a victory of freemen over those who had conspired, and laboured, and fought, unsuccessfully, to enslave the people of the three kingdoms. The disabilities, and the oppressions which ensued to the Roman Catholics, were the consequence of their adherence to, and the aid which they gave, and still appeared willing to give, to those who would have used the victory with tenfold cruelty, had it fallen to them. As the descendants of those misguided Roman Catholics of the 17th century exhibited a resolution to sever their temporal and political union with the enemies of English liberty, and the organized opponents of universal toleration, those disabilities were gradually lessened, and finally have been entirely removed, and for forty years those oppressions have wholly ceased. A principle has triumphed, and not a nation, or a party. Toleration and civil liberty are the victors ; persecution and oppression have been vanquished ; and the result is, that Protestants, and Roman Catholics ; Presbyterians, and Dissenters, are equally partakers of the liberty, freedom of conscience, and municipal rights, which have been successfully asserted and established for the benefit of all ; but they are partakers of these rights and liberties under a Protestant Sovereign, who must be a member of the Reformed Church of England, and who, in honour and conscience, is pledged to hold, and believe the creed and doctrines of that Church ; and who is bound, in duty, to all subjects of every persuasion, to maintain and uphold it, as the State Church, and as the spiritual guide and instructor of that portion of the people who have embraced a creed which recognizes the right of private judgment, and imposes no shackles upon freedom of thought, and liberty of conscience. By this characteristic, and fundamental principle of their religion, the Protestants of the Reformed Church of England are qualified, and, by inclination, as well as doctrine, disposed, to allow to others, and to protect and defend for all others, whatever may be their creeds, the same liberty of conscience which every Protestant claims for himself. Whatever acts of persecution, in derogation of this, the proper characteristic of their creed, may be truly imputed to them, during the struggle for the liberty which they claimed, it cannot be denied, that universal toleration, and a full, and unequivocal concession to others of the liberty of conscience, which they claim, and enjoy for themselves, is now the established, and

ruling principle of their government. To maintain and protect this liberty for themselves, and their posterity; to maintain and protect it for all other sects, of whatever persuasion they may be, and to what spiritual authority soever they may please to submit, it is essentially necessary, that those who accept and hold this tolerant and liberal faith (be they many, or be they few) shall be the governing body, and shall have in their hands the full power of protecting to every British subject the just and rational liberty which, as a free man, he is entitled to enjoy, without regard to his religious convictions.

The governing power thus assumed, and thus conceded to Protestants, after it was by a revolution taken out of the hands of the Roman Catholic king, is rather imposed as a duty than acknowledged as a disparaging privilege. The possession and exercise of this governing power is no more a badge of conquest, or of social inequality on the people of other persuasions, than the rank and power of the sovereign, or of the nobility, or of the magistrates, is a badge of social inequality, or inferiority on the subordinate classes of society, for whose peace and protection those gradations of power and rank have been instituted.

Many sensible and earnest men believe, that, by taking away the endowments of the Protestant Church of Ireland, and by severing the union of that Church with the Crown, they will be doing nothing more than reducing the Irish Protestants to a level with their fellow-subjects of other creeds; and that, by so doing, they will promote peace and tranquillity in the country. That these views are sincerely, and honestly entertained by many respectable and patriotic men, I have not the least doubt. That the effects of the contemplated measure will be entirely different from those intended, and so expected, and that bitter disappointment will be the result, I am equally convinced.

Before this empirical measure is adopted—before a step is taken which never can be peaceably retracted, and before that body of the Irish people to whom, and to their fellow-Protestants of other and different denominations, nine-tenths of the national improvement is due, shall be deprived of the means of public worship, as by this measure they will be, some more attentive consideration of the past ought to be applied, than as yet appears to have been bestowed by any who have discussed this complicated, and hazardous experiment.

When it is alleged that the Church of Ireland has failed to perform its mission, because the majority of the Irish people are still Roman Catholics, and because only a minority belong to the Protestant Church—and when this is assigned as a sufficient reason for now sever-

- ing the connexion between this Church and the State, and for taking away its endowment, and establishing, in Ireland, the voluntary system—truth, and justice, political honesty, and regard for national good faith, demand an historical examination of the facts on which this partisan statement is founded, and a cautious scrutiny should be made of the measures suggested, and founded upon it.

Those who, in Ireland, embraced the reformed religion, when it was established in the reign of Elizabeth, were English settlers, or descended from such settlers, and who spoke the English language. The aboriginal Irish were nearly all Roman Catholics, spoke no English, and knew nothing of the reformed religion; for they did not understand the language of those who professed it, and who were deputed to teach its doctrines. It is now asserted that Protestant Clergy were then sent to Ireland, and that with those already in Ireland, they were charged with a mission to convert the Irish people to the reformed faith, and to propagate that faith amongst them. This mission, it is assumed, was sent by the English Sovereign, and English government. It is certain that those who were sent, or employed upon it, were selected by that government, and appointed by that Sovereign, and that they were subject to the control, and ruled by the appointees and deputies, of the English Sovereign, and English ministers.

The Protestant clergy of Ireland, in the year 1868, are taunted with the failure of this mission; and told, that, because it failed, they must be severed from all connexion with the State; that after the present vested interests are provided for, the future Protestant clergy must depend, for maintenance, on the voluntary contributions of those whom they can retain in, or convert to their faith. The 700,000 Protestants of the present time are told, that this State measure works no injustice to them, that it only reduces them to an equality with their Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian fellow-subjects, by leaving them to support their own clergy; and that, therefore, no wrong is done to them by confiscating the property which, for fully three hundred years, they have enjoyed, for the support of the clergy whose religious doctrine they approve, whose instructions they receive, and value, and whose diligence in the performance of their duties, and sincerity in their convictions, calumny itself cannot deny, or throw a doubt on, for at least two generations.

As to the failure of the mission, suggested to the English Legislature, and promulgated to the English people, as an asserted fact, and as a justification for thus dealing with 700,000 of the most intelligent,

most energetic, most industrious, and to the English nation and Government the most loyal part of the Irish people, the least informed of the 700,000 may be prompted to ask, why did that mission fail? How did the English Government of Elizabeth, and subsequent Governments, act in aid and furtherance of that mission? What missionaries did the Government send, to merit the respect and reverence of the then existing Protestants of Ireland, and to preach gospel truth to the Irish Roman Catholics? Let Spenser, an Englishman—a learned man—a man of genius—a man of high moral character, and a contemporary, answer the question. His answer is as follows:—"First—there are no such sufficient ministers sent over as might be presented to any bishop for any living, but the most part of such English as come over thither of themselves are either unlearned, or men of some bad note, for which they have forsaken England, so as the bishop to whom they be presented may justly reject them, as incapable and insufficient. Secondly—the bishop himself is, perhaps, an Irishman, who being made judge by that law (*viz.*, a statute previously referred to) of the sufficiency of the ministers, may, at his own will, dislike of the Englishman, as unworthy, in his opinion, and admit of any Irish whom he shall think more for his turn. And if he shall, at the instance of any Englishman of countenance there, whom he will not displease, accept of any such English minister as shall be tendered unto him, yet he will underhand carry such a hard hand over him, or by his officers, wring him so sore, that he will soon make him weary of his poor living. Lastly—the benefices themselves are so mean, and of such small profits, in these Irish countries, through the ill husbandry of the Irish people which do inhabit them, that they will not yield any competent maintenance for any honest minister to live upon; scarcely to buy him a gown. And were all this redressed (as haply it might be), yet what good should any English minister do amongst them, by teaching or preaching to them which either cannot understand him, or will not hear him? Or what comfort of life shall he have, where his parishioners are so insatiable, so intractable, so ill-affected to him, as they usually be to all the English; or, finally, how dare almost any honest minister, that are peaceable, civil men, commit his safety to the hands of such neighbours as the boldest captains dare scarcely dwell by."

To a previous question, whether he found any particular abuses in religion in Ireland, besides that of being Popish, Spenser answered: "Yes, verily; for whatever disorders you see in the Church of England, you may find there many more, namely, gross simony, greedy covetous-

ness, fleshly incontinence, careless sloth, and generally all disordered life, in the common clergyman. And besides all these, they have their particular enormities; for all Irish priests who now enjoy the Church livings, they are, in a manner, mere laymen, saving that they have taken Holy Orders, but otherwise they do go and live like laymen, follow all kinds of husbandry, and other worldly affairs, as other Irishmen do. They neither read Scriptures, nor preach to the people, nor administer the Communion; but Baptism they do, for they christen yet after the Popish fashion, only they take the tithe and offerings, and gather what fruit else they may of their livings, the which they convert as badly, and some of them (they say) pay as due tributes and shares of their livings to their bishops (I speak of those which are Irish) as they receive them duly."

To the question, "But is that suffered amongst them? It is wonder but that the governors do redress such shameful abuses," Spenser answers: "How can they, since they know them not? for the Irish bishops have their clergy in such awe and subjection under them, that they dare not complain of them, so as they may do to them what they please; for they, knowing their own unworthiness and incapacity, and that they are, therefore, still removeable at their bishop's will, yield what pleaseth him, and he talketh what he listeth. Yea, and some of them, whose dioceses are in remote parts, somewhat out of the world's eye, do not at all bestow the benefices, which are in their own donation, upon any, but keep them in their own hands, and set their own servants and horse-boys to take up the tithes and fruits of them, with the which some of them purchase great lands, and build fair castles upon the same. Of which abuse, if any question be moved, they have a very seemly colour and excuse, that they have no worthy ministers to bestow them upon, but keep them so bestowed for any such sufficient person as any shall bring unto them."

Such was the mission, and such were the missionaries, sent and intrusted by the English Government, in the sixteenth century, to propagate the reformed religion in Ireland! No one can be surprised at the result, as described by Primate Boulter, 150 years after Spenser wrote this description of it. The character of the missionaries appears, during that long interval, to have been steadily kept up to the original standard of unworthiness, and it must have been truly deplorable to justify Swift's sarcasm, accounting for the vile character of the English who came over to fill the Irish benefices, in his time (and he was a contemporary of Primate Boulter), viz., that they were the highway-

men who had robbed the true and reverend missionaries, on Hounslow Heath, on their journey towards Ireland, and, personating their victims, came to this country, with the vestments and credentials so robbed by them, and procured admission to the Irish Church livings.

If it had been the deliberate aim and purpose of the English Government to disgust the Protestant laity of Ireland with the reformed religion, and to make the ministers of it odious in their sight; if it had been their design to leave the Irish people in total ignorance of that reformed religion, by sending preachers who could not speak or understand the Irish language, to confirm the Irish people in their adherence to the Romish creed, and to deter them from listening to the missionaries, even if they could understand their English tongue, could they have done anything more effectual to accomplish these ends than what they did, as described by Spenser, and Swift. I should, perhaps, except what they did in 1733, to convert the children of the Roman Catholics, as already detailed, in compliance with Primate Boulter's petition for the Charter Schools, "when, instead of converting the adults, the missionary clergy were daily losing many of their meaner people, who went off to Popery."

We have now arrived at a conspicuous application of the rule of justice, inverted, as it too commonly is, when what is called justice is administered in Ireland. To the unworthy clergy of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries (who, in truth, were mere aliens, in respect of the Irish people), of whom such a character comes down to us from their cotemporaries, the State and Crown allied themselves, with an affectionate will. In contempt of the Protestant laity, their congregations were insulted by the imposition upon them of those alien fugitives, and dunces, and mere laymen, in the garb of pastors. In support of these unworthy ministers, the property (clothed, as it was, with a sacred trust, that it should be applied for the benefit of the laity, in attracting, and worthily supporting competent, pious, diligent, and devoted men, for the offices of religion, and for the edification of the people) was for two centuries misapplied, in its entirety, and given by the English Government, with good will, to men, who, if they be not maligned, deserved deprivation and punishment, rather than reward. Now, when, for more than half a century, comprehending two generations, the native Irish clergy of the Protestant Church, in Ireland, have been exemplary, in all essential attributes; extorting, even from their avowed enemies, unqualified approbation and praise; this same trust property, having been, for more than half a century,

duly and properly applied, according to the trust, in the support of ministers who have faithfully and zealously performed their duties, the Government and the Legislature are roused from their lethargy, and, as if doing wrong when doing justice, they are suddenly called upon to despoil the Church, whose dignity and character have been for over fifty years, and now are, well supported by these meritorious ministers, and to repudiate this Church, and sever its union with the Crown; and to declare that the provision is extravagantly too large for supporting the clergy of 700,000 people, being only a fraction of what was for two centuries allowed for the support of clergy who shamefully neglected their duties, confined, as they were, to the religious wants of 100,000. The Government, and Legislature, who, for 250 years, allowed the temporalities of the Church, in all their integrity, to be enjoyed by the alien clergy, whose congregations were but one-eighth of the Roman Catholic population, are now threatened with sedition, if they do not take away those temporalities (modified and diminished as they have been) from the native clergy, whose congregations have multiplied absolutely seven-fold, and have also relatively increased to little less than a sixth; which increase in the congregations has taken place under the ministration, and pastoral care of the clergy who are to be so deprived. Thus the unworthy pastors of the few, in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, by whose defaults the mission failed, were extravagantly rewarded, and honoured by strict union with the Crown; and the meritorious clergy, by whose piety, learning, and diligence 700,000 of the most intelligent and respectable classes are edified, are to be spoliated, degraded, and discarded from all connexion with the Crown, as if performance of duty was a crime!!! The English people, who profess peculiar love for justice, and fair play, are worried, and agitated, and entreated thus monstrously to invert the rule of justice, in dealing with 700,000 of their Irish fellow-subjects, who, and whose ancestors, have been amongst the most loyal and faithful supporters of British rule in Ireland. If the ratio of the Roman Catholics to the Protestants still remained as it was at the Revolution, and not increased from one eighth to nearly one sixth, as it has been, this would still be foul injustice, and no sophistry of a party leader, or of his expectant followers, can conceal the enormity of this unprovoked manœuvre for recovery of power and place. How the infliction of this unmitigated injustice on 700,000 perfectly peaceable and orderly subjects of this country, at the instigation of agitators, can promote harmony and peace, no one can possibly comprehend, who knows anything of Ireland.

The Protestants who gained the victory over persecution in the 17th century, the memory and vestiges of which the Roman Catholic hierarchy now complain of, and insist upon obliterating—the same Protestants who enacted the penal laws, and for more than a century kept the Roman Catholics under oppressive disabilities, were allowed to enjoy their Church, with all its endowments, and its rank as the State Church, not only unmolested, and without question, but their right and title so to do were repeatedly, and most solemnly acknowledged by the leaders of the Roman Catholic people, both laymen and clergy, when supplicating relief from penal laws. The Protestants of 1829, who successfully laboured to emancipate their fellow-subjects, and who still survive to rejoice in that measure of justice; the younger Protestants of the present generation, who freely recognize the right of their Roman Catholic countrymen to perfect social equality, are to be despoiled of the endowment which supports their Church Establishment, are to see that Establishment degraded, and its future ministers thrown upon the voluntary support of their congregations, by the agitation, and at the bidding, of the Romish hierarchy, who owe their power so to agitate for infliction of this injustice to the liberality and aid of those upon whom they would inflict it. Here again is the rule of justice inverted, with the addition of ingratitude, to make that inversion still more detestable.

One of the securities which Protestants have devised for the freedom of thought, and the right of private judgment, which they claim, according to conscience, and according to reason, is the State provision made for support of their clergy, independently of their congregations; thus taking away from those clergy the motive for seeking, and discovering (as Lord Macaulay says the Jesuits did) “the precise point to which intellectual culture can be carried, without the risk of intellectual emancipation.” This independent provision makes it unnecessary for the Protestant clergy to teach such a Catechism as that from which I have made some quotations. They have no interest in the creation of religious terrors, or the assumption of supernatural authority, for the purpose of making their flocks subservient to their domination. They have, by this provision, been exempted from any motive to preach to their congregations subservience to themselves, admission of their heavenly title to earthly power, or obedience, to any, except to God, and to the lawful authority of their temporal sovereign. To take away from a clergy so constituted the provision thus made for them, and to reduce them to the eleemosynary support of their congregations, is to annihilate the independence which forms the essential difference between them and

the clergy against whose machinations for temporal power Protestants have thought it necessary to guard. So to despoil the clergy is not to place them on an equality with other clergy, who stand upon a totally different foundation; who for ages, being dependent on the influence which they could establish over the human mind, have taken the proper means of propagating that influence, and of making it effectual; a course of conduct absolutely forbidden to the Protestant clergy.

This theory of reducing the clergy of the Church of England to equality with the clergy of other sects, is nothing but the theory of abolishing altogether, in this country, the religion and the public worship of this section of the people. Into what other sects these Protestants, and their posterity will be distributed, or what new creeds, and forms of worship will spring from the ruins of this liberal, enlightened, and tolerant religion, time alone can disclose; but that any such congregations as now resort to the Protestant churches can continue to assemble for any considerable time, after the divorce of the Church from the Throne, and the confiscation of its endowment, or that any such ministers as they now reverence can be there to meet them, is morally impossible. Whether for good or for evil, these congregations will be scattered, and there will be no successors of the independent ministers who now address their reason; and all who may not be willing, or, from existing convictions, may not be able, without hypocrisy, to assent to the dictation of some dogmatical, or some terrifying creed, will no longer have churches open to them, where they may sincerely and devoutly worship God, and yet enjoy some latitude of private judgment.

If any of the advocates of this experiment sincerely believe, that to confiscate the property set apart for maintenance of the religion, and the clergy of 700,000 intelligent, independent, and energetic members of the community, in Ireland, will have a pacifying effect, either upon the agitators, at whose instigation this act of political turpitude, and social wrong, is to be perpetrated, or upon those who shall suffer the injustice, they will soon discover how erroneously they have calculated. It cannot alleviate any real grievance that Ireland is subject to. The alleged existence of social or religious inequality, for redress of which it is demanded, is purely fictitious, and nothing but a pretence for agitation. The measure itself will be a grievous infliction on that class, by whose intelligence, industry, and steadfast love of order, the interests of the country have been advanced, in spite of the misconduct and turbulence of other classes, and of the mischievous legislation provoked by them.

The new-born agitation of the Romish hierarchy, and those of their congregations who join in it, for destruction of the Established Church, and the confiscation of its property, is a remarkable, and not a tardy, corroboration, by accomplishment, of those prophetic arguments formerly used in opposition to Emancipation, which the liberal Protestant advocates of that measure were accustomed to treat, and to ridicule, as the visionary dreams of prejudice and bigotry.

If the Roman Catholic hierarchy claimed the ecclesiastical property, in assertion of the title which they had to it before the Reformation, that claim might be urged, without confessing a design to destroy the Protestant Church, and persecute the Protestant religion. But when they disclaim all title to the property, and quarrel with nothing but the enjoyment of it by the Protestant clergy, and urge this enjoyment as their grievance, they make it evident that demolition of the Church is their purpose and object; and the ulterior desire of becoming the dominant hierarchy is too transparent to escape the most careless observer. The enjoyment by Protestant clergymen of the rent-charges, which must continue to be paid, can be no more a grievance to the Roman Catholic clergy or laity, than the enjoyment of similar rent-charges by lay impropiators. They allege, that, because their congregations are more numerous than those of the Protestant clergy, they are better entitled to a State provision than those to whom the law gives it; and that they feel insulted at the spectacle of a wealthy, and less deserving Church thus, by an unjust preference, kept before their eyes; and the preference thus enjoyed by what they call less deserving pastors is the grievance which they complain of. This grievance, upon this, which is their own plain and simple statement of it, is nothing more, or less than envy, and comes within the strict definition of that unamiable passion given by Locke, and his definition of it presents it in a less odious form than that to be found in any English dictionary. Locke defines it as "uneasiness of mind, caused by the consideration of a good we desire obtained by one we think should not have had it before us." Johnson defines Envy in these words: "Pain felt, and malignity conceived, at the sight of excellence, or happiness." The excellence of the existing Protestant clergy of Ireland is confessed, and the confession of it is mixed with the complaints which emanate from the envy, hatred, and malice of their assailants. The *odium ecclesiasticum*, and rage for power, can alone account for the bitterness with which the Romish hierarchy complain of the preference given by a Protestant Sovereign, and a Protestant nation, to the clergy of that portion of the

Irish people who have embraced the religion of that Sovereign, and the religion which that nation, by a fundamental law of its constitution, has solemnly adopted as the State religion of England and Ireland, and as the sole religion which it is constitutionally lawful for the Sovereign, or the Viceroy to embrace.

According to their own assertions, the Roman Catholic hierarchy lose nothing by the liberality, or, if they so call it, the extravagance of the provision made for the Protestant clergy out of the national property; they not only disavow any design to claim any part of that property, but they protest, that, if offered to them, they would not accept it. No one, therefore, can possibly understand how they are damnified, or aggrieved by the application of it to the support of the Protestant worship, upon any other principle than that toleration of that worship is a grievance to them; and no rational man can believe them, when they deny the burning thirst of power to persecute that worship, by which they are themselves tormented.

The union of the Protestant Church with the Crown is another part of the same grievance. This union is an honour, and a happiness of the Protestant clergy, which gives pain to their assailants, i. e. which their assailants envy; but when this grievance is complained of by the Roman Catholic clergy, they cannot, and do not, assert or pretend, that, by the adoption of the Protestant Church, as the State Church in Ireland, the Crown has unjustly excluded them from an alliance to which they can make the faintest shadow of a pretension. Nothing could possibly be more absurd, than to suppose, or to imagine, that a Protestant Sovereign could accept an union with a Church which repudiates the ecclesiastical authority of that Sovereign, and acknowledges an alien as its head; which dogmatically teaches, and, by the most solemn and explicit denunciation of eternal perdition, enforces upon the minds of millions who owe allegiance to that Sovereign, the belief, that there is no salvation for that Sovereign, or for the great majority of that Sovereign's subjects. That the propagation of such a doctrine amongst the people who owe allegiance to the Crown is, or ever was, permitted by a Monarch and a Government which itself repudiates such a ferocious doctrine, and denies the truth of it, was, and is, carrying toleration very far; and it is difficult to see how it can be pushed a step farther, without becoming persecution of other creeds. In Ireland, it is carried not merely to this extreme of giving full and free scope and liberty to the Roman Catholic hierarchy to teach this doctrine (horrible as it obviously is) to the people of their own persua-

sion, but 4000 schools are maintained for them, at the expense of the State, and placed immediately, and exclusively under their patronage, guidance, and control; in which schools, they have license to teach their catechism, in which this is stated as a fundamental article of their religion. The 4000 schools are not only thus supported by a Protestant government, out of a treasury replenished by taxes levied from a Protestant people, by this doctrine, doomed to eternal perdition; but by the unequal, and overwhelming competition of these schools, all other schools, in 4000 extensive localities, are driven out of existence, and the Protestant children, in these 4000 localities, are reduced to the dilemma of remaining illiterate, or of attending for instruction at these schools, so subjected to the patronage, the management, and the control of Roman Catholic priests, who, in plain and unequivocal terms, assert that they have been, by Divine Providence, appointed to guard and propagate the Catholic faith; of which one dogma is, that no soul can be saved, except in communion with their Church, and that these priests are answerable to God for the souls of the human race, and therefore bound, as they will answer at the final judgment, to convert these children, and save their souls from the perdition to which, by their dogma, the parents of these children are doomed.

The Government, and the Legislature, who have instituted these schools; who have placed them in the hands of the Roman Catholic clergy; who have made this arrangement, so favourable to the propagation of Romanism, and so insurmountably obstructive of Protestant teaching, and blasting to the Protestant faith, are called upon, in the name of toleration, and of religious equality, to go still farther, and to divorce the Protestant Church from the Protestant Crown, to take away its endowment, and to strip its clergy of all support, except what their congregations may volunteer to give them, and to enact that the Protestant Church, in Ireland, as a State Church, shall cease to exist; because it has failed to convert the Irish people, whose old convictions have been thus thoroughly protected by all the power of the Government, and by the enactments of the Legislature itself.

Alien Church has been adopted, as an abusive name for expressing a contrast with what is assumed to be the Church of the people, and the native Church of Ireland; and this invented name is used to cry down the State Church. This so-called alien Church consists, exclusively, of British and Irish clergy, and nearly all native Irish. Its acknowledged head is the English Sovereign of the United Kingdom; its ritual is entirely regulated by the Legislators of the same United

Kingdom. It acknowledges no subjection to any foreign power, civil or ecclesiastical; its worship, and prayers, and all its ceremonies, are conducted in the vernacular language of its congregations. To these congregations, or to the Irish people, there is nothing whatever of an alien character connected with this Church.

The so-called Church of the people, on the contrary, repudiates the jurisdiction of the national Sovereign; and acknowledges an alien potentate as its head; its Church service is in Latin; its discipline and ceremonies are regulated by its alien head; and its clergy are appointed by him, and from him derive their authority. Their disputes are all subject to his decision; and they travel to Rome, to have these disputes heard and decided there. The regulation of penance for sins; of indulgences; of holydays; of fasts; and of ecclesiastical government, is all in the hands of this alien potentate; and it is with difficulty, and reluctance, that this so-called Church of the people submits even to the municipal laws and authorities of the country in which it exists; thus exhibiting every essential attribute of an alien Church. Again, by inverting the rule of justice, the name of alien, odious as it is meant to be, is transferred from the institution to which it properly belongs to the native establishment, which is, in all respects, national, and has nothing alien in its constitution or practice.

It is said that the Roman Catholic Church is the Church of the people, and this implies an assertion that the Protestant Church is not the Church of the people; and implies also that the Roman Catholics are the people of Ireland, and that the Protestants are not. To test the truth and accuracy of all these assertions, it is necessary to divide, and analyze the whole population of Ireland, that the title to the name of "the people" may be justly estimated.

At the census of 1861, there were in Ireland 4,505,265 Roman Catholics, and 1,289,206 Protestants; the Roman Catholics being to the Protestants in nearly the ratio of 7 to 2. In the whole population, there were 1,973,382 who could neither read nor write; a large proportion of these (probably nine-tenths of them) belong to the Roman Catholic population. Taking into account the rank, the property, the education, and knowledge of the Protestant two-sevenths, if the sects are to be estimated according to the consideration due to property, and to knowledge (which Lord Bacon says is power), and to civilization as well as numbers, it is a mere hyperbole to say, that the Roman Catholic faith is the religion of the people of Ireland.

If an independent provision cannot be made for the clergy of the

three great sects into which the people are divided, this impossibility makes it the more necessary to make such provision for at least one of these sects, and to unite this one to the Sovereign. This has been done in both England and Ireland, and the utility of it in promoting and maintaining universal toleration and peace is perfectly obvious. The clergy of the State religion, being provided for, have no temporal motives to polemical anger towards other sects. They have no interest in restraining their congregations from the free exercise of reason and private judgment; their doctrines will therefore rest more upon Scripture, according to a logical and careful interpretation, than upon dogmatical authority. Not being dependent upon the number, or the liberality of their votaries, they are not prompted to any unseemly efforts to gain proselytes, or to turbulent contests with other sects. Their union with the Sovereign, and the constitutional obligation to fill the throne by a monarch of their persuasion, is a perfect security against that worst of social calamities—a bigoted king, in the hands of a dogmatical hierarchy, claiming its power by divine right paramount to all secular authority. The temporal power of the Sovereign, under the spiritual guidance of an independent clergy, is in no danger of being abused for the cruel purpose of religious persecution, and will be duly applied to restrain other sects from violence towards each other, should they be disposed to use it.

In such an enlightened community as that of the British Islands, it may be hoped that there will always be a sufficient number to see, and to appreciate the value of an independent Church, thus allied to the temporal Sovereign, as a security for universal toleration, and liberty of conscience. Whether that number be a majority, or a minority of the population is immaterial, so long as it has the power, and the will to be an efficient peacemaker. The more numerous, and the more powerful sects are, who form themselves upon the voluntary principle, and embrace doctrines, preached by dependent clergy, the greater is the necessity for a State religion, and an independent hierarchy, united to the Throne, and affording to tolerant men the means of religious worship, conducted without unnecessary restraint upon private judgment, and flowing from, and founded on, a rational interpretation of Holy Writ, not dogmatically forced upon doubting, or dissenting hearers, but offered for assent resulting from conviction, and produced by logical argument and reason.

This view is confirmed by every page of the history of Europe, from the reign of Constantine to the present day. The religious equality

contended for by the manœuvring, and pretending Whigs means nothing more or less than license to all religious sects to worry each other, and freely indulge that envy and malignity with which the prosperity and happiness of one may affect the others. This phantom called religious equality has been adopted, as a watchword, by the spurious Whigs, now out of office, in derision, and contempt of the principles by which the constitutional party who effected the Revolution; who framed the Bill of Rights; who achieved the Habeas Corpus Act; and who raised all the other bulwarks of British liberty, were guided and actuated. As a test of this pretended equality, let a question be put to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, whether the Protestant clergy can be, by any earthly power, raised to an equality with those who assert, that they have been themselves appointed by Divine Providence, as the guardians of what they allege to be the only true religion; and as the custodees of all human souls, for whose safety they profess responsibility to God. No one can doubt that these assertors of divine right would answer this question by a negative; demonstrating that existing equality is the thing which offends them, and that ascendancy and secular domination is the object of their pursuit. Those who repudiated this enslaving pretension to divine right of princes, and of priests, were persuaded that an alliance between the Crown and the Church which made no such pretension, was essential to the dignity, the legitimate authority, and to the very existence of that liberal Church. To admit the necessity for this union in England, and to deny it in Ireland, is contradictory and absurd. The necessity for it, in Ireland, is ten-fold greater than in England, for the most obvious reasons. In England the Roman Catholics are few, compared with the Protestants, and other sects who are opposed to them. In England there has been, and there is but one language, common to all sects, whose consequent intercourse is, therefore, likely to soften the effects of that uncharitable doctrine of exclusive salvation, and to raise some humane doubt of its truth in the minds of those to whom it is propounded; and thus, in some degree, to moderate the power of the clergy over their minds. In Ireland there were, in 1861, 163,275 persons who could speak no language but Irish, and more than double that number had existed ten years before. These were, therefore, disabled from social conversation with Protestants, very few of whom speak Irish at all. In Ireland also the Roman Catholics are a majority, and, for these reasons, their clergy all the more powerful, and uncontrolled in the propagation of their exclusive doctrine. I cannot better illustrate the effect of this

intolerant doctrine on the minds of the Irish than by relating two anecdotes, the truth of which may be relied on.

The priest of my native parish was sitting with one of his flock, the wife of a shopkeeper in the village, while she was engaged in roasting a goose for dinner. The good woman, who had a full measure of the milk of human kindness in her nature, when the conversation turned on the hope of salvation, anxiously inquired of her pastor, whether for such good Protestants as Mrs. ——— (for whom she had an ardent friendship) there was no chance of salvation. The reverend father answered her question, in clear terms, with an explanatory illustration. Laying his hands on the andirons, by which the spit was supported, he drew the goose to a greater distance from the fire, saying—“Don’t you know that there may be degrees of torment in the other world; and that what I have now done may be done for Mrs. ——— on account of her good works; but as to salvation, she has no chance.” The good-natured woman, in the hope of converting her friend, related to her the opinion, and the illustration of her pastor; and from that friend I have the story.

The gentleman from whom I derive my traditional knowledge of Ireland gave to two of his farm labourers about a rood each, for potato ground, in a pasture field which he was about to break for tillage. He allowed them as much manure as they pleased from his farm yard, and they planted their potatoes in the fashion called lazy-bed. He ploughed his own part, in the proper and skilful manner, early in winter, and had it in good order in spring, and put in his seed in drills, between which the ground was carefully dug during the summer, and weeds destroyed. I was present, in October, when these two men were digging out their master’s potatoes, and one said to the other: “Ned, that’s a fine crop; isn’t it well with the Protestants in this world?” “It is so,” said Ned; “but how will it be with them in the other world?” I was a small boy, and my presence was no restraint on them, and perhaps they thought I did not understand them, for they spoke in Irish. I perfectly understood them, and their observations made a deep impression upon my mind. It never occurred to them to ascribe the good crop of their master to his good husbandry, or their own scanty crop to their lazy-bed method of tilling it.

One of the real grievances of Ireland, and one from which many great calamities have fallen upon the country, is that those who legislate for it know less about the moral condition and temper of the people than they do about the races in Central Africa, of whom some reliable

information is derived from travellers. It is a sad fact, and to the Irish nation a degrading fact, that when any of its representatives in Parliament asserts anything about Ireland, he is promptly contradicted by some Irish member of the opposing party, from which it happens, that the most respectable Irishmen in the House think it prudent to be silent, and to forbear from asserting anything themselves, or questioning anything alleged by others. The result is, that Englishmen legislate for this unhappy country either in ignorance, in anger, excited by false statements, or in the disgust produced by indecent wrangling; and we cannot be surprised at the inconsistency, the instability, and often the cruelty of the enactments inflicted upon Ireland.

I have before detailed the effects of the Charter School remedy for Popery, adopted in ignorance of the disorder then called Popery, under which the Irish were assumed to labour, as it really existed here, and of the constitution and temper of the people to whom the remedy was to be applied. It is therefore not surprising that the remedy produced effects exactly opposite to those intended; and yet this absurd remedy, even after the absurdity, and the cruelty of it were exposed, continued to be obstinately administered for ninety years, until it made the disease incurable. In the middle of the present century, we have had another remedial Act of the Legislature, passed in anger towards the landlords, an important class of the Irish people, the real effects of which have been strangely ignored, and the imaginary effects marvellously assumed, as a principal cause of an improvement in the condition of the country which subsequently took place, and was produced by other causes, notwithstanding the ruin inflicted upon thousands by the application of the remedial law.

For the first time, a poor-law was enacted for Ireland in the year 1838, against the opinions of many men well qualified to judge of its probable effects. During seven years, which immediately followed this new enactment, the population was at its maximum, being considerably over eight millions. In these years, the harvests were good, and the condition of the people corresponded. In the years 1842 and 1843, those notorious monster meetings took place on the subject of repealing the Act of Union, and people have said that Ireland was rampant during those years, and I do not remember any time in which want or destitution was less talked of. Workhouses were built, on a scale much more than sufficient to accommodate all who claimed relief, and there was not much, if any, complaint of the newly imposed burthen.

Unexpectedly, in the harvest of 1845, a disease appeared which

threatened destruction of the potato. Sir Robert Peel was then in office, and, to provide for the apprehended deficiency in the food of the people, he secretly arranged with the house of Baring and Co. for the purchase of maize and other grain, to supply the expected want. It happened, fortunately, that the potato crop of that year, 1845, was unusually abundant, that the disease did not affect it until it was fully matured, and that more than an average produce of other years remained unaffected; that, therefore, the distress was partial and trifling, by which the precautionary measures became, to a great extent, inoperative. The success with which Sir Robert Peel had concealed his provident adoption of Joseph's advice to Pharaoh surprised his successors, when, for the first time, on coming into office, they discovered it from a minute in the Treasury. The wisdom of this secrecy was soon illustrated by the new Government, in the manner which will be immediately explained. It got some faint praise from his successors; but full justice has never been done, and never will be done, to the provident ability of the great statesman whose precautions proved more than adequate to the occasion.

In the beginning of August, 1846, before the potato was mature, an universal blight fell upon it, by which it was all but entirely destroyed. It was immediately manifest, that the food, upon which many millions of people depended for life, was blasted, and suddenly annihilated. The calamity had then really come, which had been only threatened the year before.

In August, 1846, there was a large quantity of the corn of the previous year still on hands, both at home and abroad; and the new corn harvest being abundant, the prices were moderate, and the demand was dull. There was no mistake, or doubt, as to the approaching famine, and its magnitude was evident and appalling. Had Baring and Co. and other like agents, been secretly instructed to buy up maize and other grain, and the operations repeated which were disclosed by the Treasury minute of the previous year, and which that minute ought to have suggested, some millions of lives might have been saved. But that was not to be. A different course was adopted, and a sadly different effect was produced. Upon the plausible principle of not interfering with ordinary operations of trade, the Government announced, in Parliament, their intention not to interfere with the regular trade by which Indian corn and other grain could be brought into the country; and the trade, upon their economical principles, was to be left at liberty, both wholesale and retail—free from interference of Government. This

announcement immediately excited a disposition to speculate in grain. The demand, which was previously dull, was sensibly quickened; prices began to rise, and the assurance that the market would not be affected by Government operations gave confidence to buyers. Large purchases were made on speculation, at constantly advancing prices, both at home and abroad; and great numbers of floating cargoes were bound for British ports, and changed owners ten or twelve times, during the winter and spring, but were still tenaciously held for a rise, and kept out of consumption. The prices at which these were speculatively bought continually advanced, and in the month of May, 1847, became nearly double what they had been the previous August, September, and October. Many British and Irish merchants bought these, at prices extravagantly over the value, in the hope of getting still more. The general result will clearly appear from the case of one merchant, a client of mine, who in the winter of 1846-7, became the owner of corn cargoes of such number and magnitude, that if he had accepted the prices pressed upon him in April and May, 1847, he would have realized a profit of £70,000. He held for still higher offers, until the market turned in June, fell in July, and rapidly tumbled, as an abundant harvest became manifest. He still held, hoping a recovery, and in the end of October he became a bankrupt. The effect of the speculation, excited by the published determination of the Government not to do anything to affect the markets, was to transfer a large amount of Irish capital to foreign growers, and foreign merchants, to keep corn out of consumption, while the famine raged, and to multiply the expense of keeping the people alive in the poor-houses.

It required great care and skill, and very difficult and able arrangements to conceal from the public the active operations of Sir Robert Peel in 1845, and he did most effectually conceal them, and bought largely, without exciting, or disturbing the markets. The Government of 1846 had no operations to conceal; and, to avoid doing mischief, they had only to be silent. They were, however, tempted to earn the cheers of speculators, which ended in bitter lamentations, and disaster to the people.

As a substitute for Sir Robert Peel's remedy, which his rivals and successors in office boastfully declined to adopt, certain works were devised, upon public roads, in all parts of Ireland, for the purpose of giving employment, at ten pence a day, to the people. The announcement of these works, and the Government scheme of employment, impressed the starving class with a belief, that their support was to

be permanently provided for by the Government; and they abandoned all ordinary operations and exertions of their own for earning support. They crowded on the public works in such multitudes, that it became impossible to devise for them any useful operations. They were set upon the roads, to cut down hills, and fill hollows, where scarcely a hill or a hollow existed; the public traffic was interrupted, and highways seriously injured. Labourers left ordinary employments for some public work, and for no better wages, solely because the public work was, in fact, no work, but a farcical excuse for getting a day's wages. The demoralizing effects of those works upon the Irish labourers continued for many years, after the country recovered from the famine.

The old and decrepit, the women and children, and the surplus multitude for whom no employment could be devised, crowded all the poor-houses to overflowing, and the people entered those dreadful abodes, never to return. They died there daily, by hundreds; and, in effect, the poor-law became but an expensive mode of destroying them.

A maxim was adopted, that the Irish land should support the Irish paupers, whose existence and whose destitution were imputed to the landlords. The poor-law gave active operation to this assumed rule of justice; and, in all the Unions, the poor-rate became a crushing tax. In some, it amounted to 20s., in others, to 25s., and even to 30s. in every pound of the valuation, and thus turned many estates into a burthen on the owner, in place of being his support. Such was the condition of landowners, and their tenants, in the year 1849, when the Legislature proceeded to enact a remedy for the calamity by which Ireland was overwhelmed. Land having, in many cases, become a burthen, and in many others of no present value; large tracts, in some localities, had been abandoned, and made desolate; the cabins ruined, and the tenants dead, or in the poor-house. The best estates in the country were depreciated to less than half their former value. The rents swallowed by the poor-rate, which was enormously increased by the price of corn, factitiously kept up by the speculators. The tax was paramount to all other charges, and scarcely sufficient means to meet it could be raised by the famine-stricken agricultural population. Under these sad circumstances, some State physician prescribed a remedy called the "Act further to facilitate the Sale and Transfer of Incumbered Estates in Ireland," which received the Royal assent on the 28th July, 1849, when the famine and the poor-law had

got full time to produce their worst effects. The short operation of that enactment was to enable the first incumbrancer, or any other who believed the estate would fetch a price large enough to reach the payment of his own demand, by a summary proceeding, in a new court, instituted for the purpose, to force a speedy sale of the estate, regardless of the creditors whose demands half price could not reach, and regardless of the owner, whose equity of redemption, under existing circumstances, was worth nothing.

The advantage thus presented to the owners of early incumbrances was too obvious, and too tempting not to be seized, and, in addition to the previously existing causes of depreciation, the market for land became suddenly glutted; and to increase the chance of getting bidders, every creditor, except the petitioner who was forcing the sale, was at free liberty to bid, like any other person, and even the petitioner, by leave of the court, (which was easily procured) might become the purchaser; and the purchasing creditor was to have credit for his demand as against the price. By this new process, estates were sold, to the amount of many millions, during the years 1849, 1850, 1851, and 1852, for less than half their value, and less than half the prices which the same estates would bring, had the sale been deferred to the end of 1853. Some of the most ancient and respected families in the country, whose estates were not incumbered to much more than half their value, were sold out, and beggared; thousands of creditors, whose demands would have been paid, if the sale had not been accelerated, were not reached, and lost the money which they had lent upon what was ample security, at the time it was lent, and would again have become sufficient security, had the property not been ruined by the poor-law, and sold in that ruined condition, in a glutted market, under an enactment devised for the professed purpose of improving the condition of Ireland. The law's delay, which, in ordinary circumstances, is a grievance, and a vexation, would have a salutary, and a just effect, in those calamitous times. There was no justice in exonerating the early incumbrancers from all participation in the effects of the visitation which had come upon the country, and every feeling of humanity, and every principle of equity, demanded temporary indulgence from them. There was cruel injustice in turning a destructive visitation of Providence into an advantage to them, which they could not have had, if the law had been left as it stood when they made their contracts and took their securities; and as it still stands in England.

The administration of the crushing poor-law was effectually taken

out of the hands of the guardians who were elected by the ratepayers, and committed to certain officials, whose powers were largely extended by two Acts passed in June and July, 1847, and who, having no interest in the chargeable property, had no motive to a jealous scrutiny of claims for relief, nor to vigilance in controlling expenditure. By this system, the rents of the land were sequestered for support of a starving population, who had abandoned all intention of earning their bread by labour, and who had fallen into the fatal mistake of believing, that the Government was able and willing to provide for them.

The effect of forcing a peremptory sale of property, so circumstanced, and so affected, will be best understood by considering a single case, which is nothing but an instance out of a multitude, and is by no means as grievous as many others which took place between 1849 and 1854.

An extensive estate, in the West of Ireland, by the death of the owner, came into the possession of his son, who had recently completed his collegiate education. The family stood in the first rank of the gentry, in their county, and had long been highly respected. The estate had been incumbered, but not to an amount equal to half its value. The young proprietor determined to sell as much as would pay off the charges, and had received offers which he did not think adequate to the value, and was holding on for better prices. For one portion, which he was desirous to sell, he was offered £15,000; for another division, he was offered £10,000. He still held out for better prices. His creditors having confidence in their securities, he was under no obligation to sell his property for less than its value; and the prospects of the country were as bright as they had ever been before; when, in the first week of August, 1846, an unforeseen calamity annihilated the food of one-half the population of Ireland. The blight which destroyed the potato crop was an event of a single night, and the morning sun made the destruction evident to every eye. There was no room for doubt: there was no shadow of hope: dismay was the universal feeling of all classes, high and low. All thoughts of purchasing land instantly vanished, and every pending treaty was broken off. Those upon whom this calamity fell may be divided into two classes, viz., those who could afford to lose their potato crop of that year, and be only by so much the less prosperous; and those to whom the loss brought penury and want. The remedy devised for the destitute was, the useless works, by which every effort to help themselves was paralyzed. It was soon discovered that no Government has power to feed a nation that will not

work. This truth was not known, or was not attended to, until experience made it fatally evident. The people relied on the Government to provide work and wages for them, and came in such multitudes, that the Government became bewildered, and dismayed, and took shelter in the State maxim, that the land of Ireland must support the poor of Ireland, and this led to the cruel Act for Sale of Incumbered Estates.

This new law removed the expenses, the delay, and the uncertainty of a suit in Chancery, in which all who had an interest in the property should be parties, with a right to have their several equities justly attended to; one of which would certainly have been to forbear from selling at a sacrifice ruinous to all except the foremost creditor. No court of equity would have shut its eyes to the visitation of Providence, by which the owner of the property had been disabled from paying the demand, or keeping down the interest. No court of equity would have despaired of a return of better times. Every principle of justice, and every sentiment of humanity would, under such circumstances, be a full warrant and justification for the law's delay, and for postponing the sale until an adequate price could be obtained. What happened in the case to which I am alluding, and what happened in, I know not how many hundred other cases, not only similar, but greatly more crushing to the parties than that to which, for a mere example, I am referring, could not possibly have happened, had there been no exceptional legislation for Ireland. In this case the first mortgagee promptly availed himself of this *remedial* Act, and the *whole* estate was sold, under its provisions, before the end of 1850. The lot for which £15,000 had been refused was peremptorily sold for a trifle over £6000. The lot for which £10,000 had been offered and refused was sold for £4000. The rents payable by the tenants were all moderate rents. The highest prices obtained amounted only to twelve years' purchase of these rents, and many lots realized no more than seven years' purchase. The first mortgagee is now the owner of the family mansion, and a large part of the family property. The puisne creditors were left unpaid. The owner was cast pennyless upon the world; and such was the effect of one of the State remedies for one of the heaviest afflictions with which Providence had ever visited any country.

The ruined owner of this estate, fortunately for himself, was young, and had got a learned education. He turned his attention, at once, to the Church, was ordained; and the small benefice of the parish in which his hereditary mansion stands, subsequently became vacant. The bishop of the diocese, unsolicited, collated to it the ejected owner of the large

estate in which the parish lies ; where for twelve or thirteen years, he has lived, and is passing rich on £115 a year, beloved and respected by every Protestant, and every Roman Catholic, rich and poor, within many miles of his humble manse ; presenting an edifying example of submission to the will of Him whose mercy tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.

The remuneration given to this educated gentleman for performing the duties of a parish, and answering the demands of charity, in what is frequently a famine-stricken locality, suggests attention to the true and actual magnitude of the endowment of the Church Establishment in Ireland, which has been exaggerated by those who declaim against its existence ; the declamation being founded almost entirely on two grounds—viz., the large incomes of bishops, and the small congregations of some incumbents. There are, in Ireland, 1611 of these incumbents, and the net income of each is stated in Thom's Directory. In some parishes, the yearly amount is under £20. In 357 it is under £100. In 351 it is over £100, but under £200. In 435 it is over £200, but under £300. In 238 it is over £300, and does not exceed £400. In 100 it is over £400, but does not exceed £500. In 62 the income exceeds £500, and does not exceed £600. Only 18 have incomes over £600, and not exceeding £700. The same number have incomes above £700, but not exceeding £800. But 15 have incomes more than £800, but not exceeding £900. Nine have incomes above £900, but not over £1000. Only four have £1100 ; and the same number have £1200 ; and this is the largest income enjoyed by any parish minister in Ireland.

Most of the rectors who have the large incomes are obliged to support curates in chapels of ease, and to assist also in the parish church, and in the other duties, in large and populous parishes, of which there are many in Ireland, and the Protestant congregations of which are numerous. All notice of these is suppressed, in the declamations of assailants. There are many parishes, in which the congregations are so large, and the duties so onerous, and yet the income of the rector so small, that the parishioners support a curate, and, in some cases, more than one, to assist in ministering to the religious wants of the Protestant parishioners ; being a duty too onerous to be discharged by the incumbent alone.

The Protestant rector of a parish must support the rank of a gentleman. That he shall have a family is not only allowed, but expected ; and that he shall maintain them with decency, in his proper rank, is imperative upon him. The curates also must keep their place, as gen-

tlemen, upon stipends which seldom exceed the wages now paid to carpenters and bricklayers and other skilled labourers in Dublin, and other cities in Ireland. Both rectors and curates must be in constant view of, and in close contact with, the poor and the destitute, who, as well Roman Catholic as Protestant, come to their doors with claims upon charity not to be answered by an accusation that they have embraced a different creed. I shall ever retain the deep and painful impression made on me by an artless, but graphic description given to me of the daily scene which, during the famine years, was exhibited at the parlour windows of a Protestant clergyman, in the neighbourhood of Skibbereen, in the county of Cork. When this clergyman, his wife, five or six children, and his aged sister (from whom I had the sad account) sat at breakfast, or at dinner, a crowd of living skeletons stood craving at the windows; and the family, by feelings which could not be resisted, were compelled to act as if they were on board a disabled ship at sea, and to divide their morsel of food, retaining for themselves only the famine allowance which they distributed to the craving crowd. This poor man's income was but £75 a year, and he had nothing else to live on, and support his family. His brother was vicar of the parish in which I was born, the income of which was, and is, about £150 a year. Of this income, during the famine years, the poor-rate took away one-half. In 1849, the wife of this clergyman, leading her son, about six years old, by the hand, entered my study, in Dublin, and gave me a harrowing account of their sufferings during those awful times. She had a hope, that I might use some influence, as an old friend, for their relief; but she mistook my position, I was addicted to no party; I had no influence; and I was unable to help them.

These clergymen are bound to constant residence in their parishes, however remote, and however poor. During the frequently recurring summer famines, when landlords and impropiators can enjoy their incomes, far away from spectacles of starved and destitute fellow-creatures, the Protestant clergymen, their wives, and their daughters, have constantly to behold them; to listen to their supplications for a morsel of food; and to deplore the inadequacy of the means in their power to relieve them. The Roman Catholic clergyman, who is known to be dependent on the voluntary contributions of his flock, and has not a family, is not so obviously, and so painfully exposed to importunities of the destitute, as the Protestant rector and his family.

The present incumbents will suffer nothing from the manœuvre by which the Protestant clerical order is to be abolished, to which these

useful men belong. When they die out, and disappear, the Protestants, whether many or few, will be without the means of public worship, in numberless remote localities; and, in those places, the religion must also die out. This is the effect desired, and expected by the rival hierarchy; and, according to their Catechism, it is an effect which they may glory in producing, for the salvation of souls. The 700,000 Protestants, who repudiate this Catechism; who believe that rational liberty, emancipation of the human mind, and religious worship, according to human reason, and according to conscience, are bound up with, and must stand or fall with the independent clergy of the Protestant State Church, will be the principal, but not the only sufferers, by the abolition of that Church. That the Roman Catholic laity, and especially the poor and ignorant part of them, will lose a protecting shield, I have no doubt, and many intelligent Roman Catholics are of this opinion. But what shall be the precise nature, or what may be the extent of the suffering resulting from this party manœuvre, or when it will begin to be felt, I cannot foresee, nor can any other man. I have great faith in the power of a sensible, intelligent, and earnest people, to find some means to mitigate, and to prevent the bad consequences of mischievous legislation; and to evade, and turn aside the operation of pernicious State measures. This country has recovered from the destructive remedies for its disorders, which, for centuries, have been prescribed by State physicians, and administered by officials. That it survived, and recovered is mainly due to the constitutional vigour and energy of those Protestant sects, both of the English and Presbyterian creeds, against whom the present manœuvre is directed. I trust that some solution of the difficulty into which the proposed measure will bring the nation may be discovered, which will be consistent with the prosperity and happiness, and, above all things, with the peace of the country. That portion of the Irish people, before referred to, who are not known to the English nation; who are ignored by the legislators; who are disregarded by the agitators, or regarded with envy and hatred, will suffer the first and most immediate effects of the attack upon their public worship. It will affect the other Protestants, who belong not to the Church of England, less directly, but not less certainly. These two classes of Protestants make nearly one-third of the whole people; but to them the great bulk of the landed, and personal property of the country belongs. This property they possess and enjoy, in the sight and presence of the Roman Catholic population, who are mingled with them, more than double their number in the

whole island ; and, in some localities, twenty to one. If the abusively termed wealthy clergy of the State Church be an insulting spectacle, kept in view of the Roman Catholic clergy, who are assumed to be poor, in order to support the argument—that the wealth of others is an insulting grievance to them—if tender regard for religious, and social equality demand confiscation of the property, the enjoyment of which by its owners is, by party leaders, held up, as an insult to those who have not any similar provision ; if this be sound argument, and if any such motive to the attack, in truth, or sincerity, exists, it becomes difficult to understand why the Roman Catholic laity should not feel insulted at the spectacle of a wealthy minority of Protestants, kept continually before their eyes, poor and wretched, as nine-tenths of these Roman Catholic people are ; and why they should not have as just reason to call for an abatement of this insulting grievance, by confiscation of the property, thus insultingly enjoyed, in their view, by a few Protestants, as the Roman Catholic hierarchy have to demand the confiscation of the Church endowment, for the same reason. Most of the Roman Catholic laity are *really* poor, and the majority of them often almost destitute. Scarcely one of them is exempt from the grievance, if grievance it be, of beholding the insulting spectacle of some Protestant, rolling in his carriage, and otherwise enjoying enormous wealth, as compared with his own penury : the clergy of these poor people are *not* poor, and to say they are is an audacious misrepresentation. The spectacle of a wealthy Protestant minister, as compared with the poorest Roman Catholic curate in Ireland, is rare, if any such exists at all ; and yet the existence of such spectacle, extensively, is assumed, as the justification for confiscating the endowment of the State Church. This property was granted by the Crown to the several incumbents, and their successors, in exercise of the same prerogative which empowered the Crown to grant any other property to the grantee, and his heirs. If the Roman Catholics claimed this property for their clergy, as successors to those who were the owners before the Reformation, such claim would raise a pure question of title. If they claimed for their clergy an equivalent provision out of some other property or fund, this would raise only a question of compensation for public services, and performance of religious duties to a large section of the people. But when they assail the endowment of the Protestant Church, as a grievance to themselves, merely because their own clergy are not endowed ; when their clergy assert that the wealth of the Protestant Church is an insulting spectacle in their eyes, and therefore a grievance,

the foundation of the complaint is socialism. Every class in the community has the same right to complain, on the same grounds, of the superior wealth of any other class, and every individual to complain of the superior wealth of his neighbour. The sentiment which excites to this complaint is the passion of envy, in its plainest form, and without the least disguise. To exercise the legislative power, as now proposed by a manœuvring political party, is to prostitute that power for the gratification of a malignant passion in one hierarchy towards another, in violation of vested proprietary rights, and in contempt of that moral restraint which is the only protection British subjects have against the otherwise unlimited power of the three Estates.

The proprietary rights which the Legislature is called on so to violate are vested legally in the clergy, but beneficially for the Irish Protestants of the United Church of England and Ireland. The property which is so vested, and which the Legislature is called on to confiscate, was granted for the support of their religion and worship. If that religion and worship have become blasphemous, or, in any other way, socially intolerable, it may be proper, or necessary to exercise the legislative power in abolishing the religion, and in prohibiting the worship; and the dupes of such a depraved persuasion may thus forfeit their right to the property originally granted for support of a true religion. By such a forfeiture, the property would revert to the Crown; and might, in such case, be legally, and properly granted to other uses. This is what took place at the Reformation. If the Roman Catholic religion has become, in the opinion of the Legislature, the only true religion, as by its Catechism it is asserted to be; if all men be obliged (in the words of that Catechism) to be of that only true religion; and if it be the duty of the temporal Government to enforce that obligation, and to persecute the clergy, and the laity of every other persuasion, then we have arrived at a second Reformation, and the endowment of the condemned Church may be legally confiscated. This was the counter Reformation which took place on the accession of Mary. This counter Reformation inflicted not only a forfeiture of property on the Church of Edward VI., but a cruel forfeiture of life upon the clergy and the laity of that Church.

James II. was proceeding to accomplish a Reformation analogous to Mary's. He began in Scotland with the Presbyterians, pretending that he tortured them with the boot and the thumbscrew, because they refused to join the Episcopalian Church of England, which he himself detested; and he proceeded, in England, at the same time, by prosecuting the bishops of that Church, because they refused, at his

command, to violate the law in favour of those who embraced his own creed.

The Romish hierarchy who persuaded Mary, that it was "an act of faith" to light the fires, and burn Protestants in Smithfield; who persuaded James to adopt the course by which he lost his throne, are still the same hierarchy, by succession; organized under the same head, teaching the same Catechism, claiming the same direct authority from Divine Providence to guard the deposit of the Catholic faith on earth, and assuming the same responsibility to God for the souls of their flocks.

He must be a superficial observer of passing events who does not see, that this hierarchy are availing themselves of the toleration granted by a Protestant Government, to regain their lost power in England—that they occupy Ireland as the base of their polemical operations—that the Irish branch of the State Church of the United Kingdom is an outwork of that ecclesiastical fortification, by which the liberty of these countries, both civil and religious, is protected—that the same artillery, with which they are now battering this outwork, is quite as applicable to the demolition of the principal fortress, as soon as they shall have cleared their way to it. Since Emancipation has been achieved, and perfect civil and religious liberty established, this island has been an available base of operations to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, for accomplishing their future designs. In it, they very soon opened their trenches, unobserved; and all their approaches have been made slowly, insidiously, cautiously, and skilfully; until they believe, that a favourable moment for unmasking their battery has been presented by the present unexpected position of the contending parties in England. Now we hear the cry that the "hour is come, and the man is come," and the Irish Church must fall, outwork though it obviously is of the great fortification of English liberty. When, with James II. on the throne, it was supposed that the hour was come, and the man was come for a counter Reformation, England was saved, by a rash attack upon its Established Church, in the prosecution of the seven bishops. Whether the present assault upon the Irish Church will produce a similar reaction, I am unable to foresee; but I have no difficulty in seeing the necessity for it.

In the last century, and in the Irish Parliament, the landlords, by an iniquitous resolution of the Commons, exonerated the pasture lands of Ireland from the burthen of the Church, and threw the whole weight of it upon the tilled land. It has already been shown how this tilled

land formed but a small part of the whole, and how it was held, and cultivated by the poor labouring cottiers.* These were obliged to give to the Protestant minister one-tenth of their crops, or else to buy this tenth at the clergyman's price. It followed that the farmer who spent most manure and labour, and applied most skill in the cultivation of his land, paid, or was, for that reason, bound to pay, a larger amount to the minister. This sort of impost necessarily became odious, and the clergy were forced into a practice of setting the whole tithe of the parish to men called proctors, whose profit depended on the rigour with which they enforced payment from the farmers. It frequently happened that the price demanded for the tithe was such, that the farmer preferred paying it in kind; and nothing could be more vexatious than the process of severing it from his own part of the produce. While this system continued, the Protestant Church was a heavy grievance, and the pressure of it was borne chiefly by the tillage farmers, the great majority of whom were poor cottiers, and Roman Catholics. The discontent created by it was then loud, violent, and universal throughout the country; and the Legislature was forced into a measure of adjustment, by which the cultivators of the soil were effectually exonerated; by which the unjust exemption of grass land was reformed; and by which the liability of the landlord was substituted for that of the tenant, and a large abatement made as a consideration for undertaking that liability. This adjustment is now fully thirty years in operation, and it is no longer true that the Church is a cause of popular discontent, nor is there any just reason why it should be.

One of the difficulties by which this empirical measure of confiscation is pressed is the absence of all, even colourable, claims upon the confiscated property, and the variety, if not conflict, of opinion as to the uses to which it should be applied. No two of the abolitionists have agreed upon this important point, nor have they even seriously discussed it. For 300 years it has been appropriated to defray the expenses of religious worship for those who embrace the creed, by the law and constitution of the country, not only sanctioned as the national creed, but imperatively enjoined upon the Sovereign, as the only creed which it is lawful for the Sovereign who fills the throne of this realm to profess. No other party has, or pretends to have, any colour of right to this property. It is difficult to understand upon what principle of justice, or of benevolent legislation, an endowment and a right can be

* This is historically shown in the book, Chap. IV., pp. 125 to 130.

taken away, after 300 years' acquiescence in the enjoyment of it, and in the absence of claim to it by any other party. That the existing generation to whom it has descended are only 700,000 in number seems a very bad reason for confiscating the property, for so long a time applied in providing churches and clergy for this section of the Queen's subjects. These subjects and their ancestors, for 300 years, have been exempt from the charge of supporting public worship, and of administering religious instruction, according to the doctrine and form of worship adopted by the State, and used in all the churches of England and Ireland to which Protestants resort. This doctrine is publicly, and constantly, and by legal authority, pronounced to be the doctrine of the "true religion established amongst us." It is difficult to understand how the Legislature can now justly reduce these 700,000 subjects to the dilemma of shutting up their churches, and dispensing with the services of clergy, or else bear the newly-imposed burthen of defraying the expense of supporting these churches and clergy themselves. Five millions of other subjects live in the same island with these 700,000, but do not resort to the same churches, and do not submit to the religious teaching of the same clergy; and, therefore, derive no benefit from the property by law set apart for support of the churches and worship of the smaller number. The five millions do not pretend that they have any right to the property thus enjoyed for centuries by their fellow-subjects. The absence of all right to claim it themselves increases the difficulty of comprehending what right they can have to insist upon the confiscation of it, in derogation of the rights of their fellow-subjects. Suppose a tract of land intervening between a village and a church, over which the owner, 300 years ago, or thirty years ago, suffered such of the inhabitants as resorted to that church to make a short passage to it over his land, and for thirty years did not interrupt them, this use would make their right of way indefeasible. If, during all the same time, a Roman Catholic chapel stood also at the other side of the same land, but the Roman Catholics, for some reason, did not cross the land, but resorted to the chapel by the longer public road, and, therefore, acquired no right of other way to their chapel: no one can understand how these facts would warrant a complaint on the part of the Roman Catholics, founded on the assertion, that they felt aggrieved at the enjoyment of the short-cut by their Protestant neighbours; that the constant view of their Protestant neighbours exercising this right of way had become an insult to their feelings, ten times more numerous, as they find they are, than the favoured Protestants. The owner of the land, if willing, could not

redress this grievance, by stopping the way, after thirty years of acquiescence : (just as the owner of a chargeable estate is disabled from refusing to pay the rent-charge). If, under these circumstances, the Roman Catholics preferred a petition to the Legislature, to have redress of this grievance, by abolition of this offensive right of way (made offensive only by the passion of envy), it is impossible to imagine that the unquestionable *power* of the Legislature would be exercised in such a case. If the right was founded on an express grant by a partial, and prejudiced Protestant owner, for the benefit of those of his own persuasion ; and if he expressly had refused to give a similar liberty to those of any other creed, this might account for the privilege enjoyed by one class, and for the exclusion of the other, but it would not alter their rights. For right of way, if we substitute rent-charge, issuing out of the land, and for thirty years applied to defray the expenses of worship for the benefit of Protestants, it seems impossible to see how the principles of justice, which govern one of these cases, can be differently applied to the other. That a Protestant Sovereign, in disposing of property, according to his lawful and constitutional prerogative, had a right to prefer the clergy of his own Church to those of any other, and to grant property for the support of that Church, in exoneration of the laity of that Church, and to support an independent clergy, according to his clear constitutional right to dispose of that property, and, at the same time, to decline making any such grant for support of any other Church, seems as plain a truth as any that can be conceived. The same Sovereign, at the same time, granted exactly similar property (vested in him by the same events, and on precisely the same title), not for the support of any Church, but to laymen ; thereby diverting it from the uses to which it had been originally destined : no one can understand upon what ground of reason or justice this grant to a layman can stand good, and be considered irrevocable, if the grant for the proper religious use is to be avoided. It may be even said, that the grant to a layman of ecclesiastical property should not stand, because it was improvident and illegal ; and even long enjoyment may be answered by the maxim, *nullum tempus* ; much may be plausibly urged against the impropiators' title, of which not a word would be applicable to impeach the title of the Church. The poor and multitudinous neighbours of the wealthy impropiator may, with as much reason, complain of the insulting spectacle, constantly in their view, of his luxurious enjoyment of the property so given to him, as the Roman Catholic clergy, or laity now complain of the Protestant bishop's enjoyment, in their view, of his large income ;

not to mention that this latter complaint is, by the present agitation, and without ablush, extended to the humble incumbent of the poorest benefice in Ireland, as well as to the bishop.

When toleration has been conceded, to the extent of allowing the Roman Catholic clergy to teach, "that true Christians are to be found only in the true Church: that the holy Catholic Church is this true Church; and that there is no other true Church: that all are obliged to be of this true Church, for that no one can be saved out of it:" does it not behove Protestants, and especially the Protestant Sovereign, who are insulted by such doctrine as this, to provide teachers for themselves and their children, to strengthen their minds, and to fortify their reason against the terrors of such a denunciation?

The propositions here stated are copied from "THE MOST REVEREND DR. JAMES BUTLER'S CATECHISM; REVISED, ENLARGED, APPROVED, AND RECOMMENDED BY THE FOUR R. C. ARCHBISHOPS OF IRELAND AS A GENERAL CATECHISM FOR THE KINGDOM." Published, in Dublin, by James Duffy, 15, Wellington Quay, and 22, Paternoster Row, London, in the year 1866, and sold for three half-pence.

I should like to ask the two Chief Judges, and the seven puisne Judges, placed by our gracious Sovereign on the Irish Bench of Justice, did they learn this Catechism? Do they believe it to be true? If they do, what do they suppose to be the sentiments of their Protestant brother judges, who sit beside them, and who pray for that Sovereign, under the style and title of their most gracious and religious Sovereign, as, at least, every Protestant subject in the realm most sincerely and affectionately believes her to be? Do they believe, that her confiding faith, her unaffected piety, her exemplary virtues, both public and private, her anxiety for the happiness, here, and hereafter, of all her subjects, manifested by every act of her life, do yet not entitle her to the name of a true Christian, and are to be unavailing for her salvation, as this Catechism, *ex cathedrá*, declares they must be? Is this Sovereign (who is, by positive contract with all her subjects, firmly bound not to be of this so called only true Church) to be prohibited from maintaining a Church, and a clergy, in Ireland, to administer to her and her Protestant subjects, and to her Protestant viceroy, some rational and comforting antidote against the terrors of this doctrine, tolerated as it is; taught as it is; and preached as it is to millions of her subjects? The men who teach, and who preach this doctrine—the men who learn it, and hear it preached (in shameless abuse of a toleration unparalleled in the rest of Europe), complain, that they are in-

sulted by the support given to the Church and the clergy of those who are denounced, and anathematized by it. Insulting, as it is to all Protestants, to propagate this doctrine amongst their neighbours, whom they are, by their own Christian faith, bound to love as they do themselves, the complaint thus made against the Church and the clergy of these Protestants, is still more insulting than the doctrine so propagated, for it must assume that they are devoid of understanding, and self-respect, when it is expected that they will listen patiently, not to say favourably, to such a complaint; and that they will abolish their own Church, and despoil their own clergy, in deference to it.

When the Church revenue was levied in the shape of tithe, and was really a grievance, the discontent which it created amongst those so aggrieved was just; was violent and universal, and produced battle and bloodshed. It was wholly unlike the groundless, the palpably factitious discontent now exhibited by the Roman Catholic hierarchy; and, in deference to them, asserted also by some laymen, and expressed by a meagre resolution, underwritten by a long string of Roman Catholic peers and gentlemen, whose assertion that they feel aggrieved, no impartial rational man can see any adequate reason for.

When it is said, that there are abuses in the Church, and particularly in the application, and distribution of the temporalities, this raises a question entirely different from that of confiscation, and abolition. The temporalities were granted for securing religious worship, and religious instruction, by a clergy not dependent on voluntary support, and according to the articles of the reformed faith, for the benefit of the laity who embraced that faith, and still hold it. To correct any misapplication, or abuse of the temporalities granted for this purpose, is entirely consistent with the grant, and in no way derogatory from the letter, or the spirit of that grant. The commission for inquiring into, and reporting the condition of the Church, with a view of legislating for the correction of abuses, if any be found to exist, or of improving the arrangements by which the due application of the property may be enforced, and by which the effectual execution of the public trust may be secured, is not only consistent with, but conducive to the maintenance of the Church Establishment. There is, therefore, no logical force in the inference, suggested by way of *argumentum ad hominem*, that this commission is an admission, that the Irish Church cannot stand on its present foundation.

I have sincerely expressed, in these pages, the feelings and views which I entertain on this subject, as an Irish Protestant. No one can

truly say, that I ever felt, or ever expressed, an illiberal sentiment towards Roman Catholics, or towards the members of any other religious persuasion, or that I ever regarded persecution, in any form, or in any degree, on account of religious convictions, with any other feeling than unqualified condemnation. If the other Protestants of Ireland view the assault upon their religious establishment, in the same light, and with the same sentiments that I entertain, and have here expressed, it is difficult to understand how the proposed measures can promote tranquillity in this country, or how they can be carried into effect, without inflicting a bitter sense of injustice and insecurity, upon the minds of the large and important class of the people affected by them. The Roman Catholic hierarchy, by the terrors of the Catechism which they teach, have established a power of raising a revenue greatly exceeding that of the Protestant Church. The use of such means is forbidden, and made impracticable to the Protestant clergy; therefore to take away from them the provision made for them by the constitution, and the law, is not to level, and make equal, but to destroy the possibility of any approximation to equality with the rival hierarchy.

If this scheme of abolition be carried into execution, I cannot see what answer can be given to an Irish Protestant thus addressing the English Government, the English Sovereign, and the English Legislature:—

“Looking at the whole course of your conduct towards Ireland, and at all the proceedings adopted by you, for the professed purpose of propagating the reformed religion in that country, I cannot believe that you sincerely intended to do what you so professed. For 140 years after your adoption, in England, of the reformed religion, you allowed the Irish people to remain in total ignorance of the principles of that religion, knowing that they did not understand the language of the clergy whom you sent to preach its doctrines in Ireland. During all that time, you left them under the instructions and influence of the clergy who spoke their own language, and who, by your permission and sufferance, taught the doctrines which you pretended to condemn; and who stigmatized the reformed religion as a damnable heresy, which it was certain perdition to embrace, or listen to. The clergymen whom you sent to live, and preach the reformed religion amongst them, although they could not speak intelligibly to the Irish people, could yet, by their course of life, exhibit the moral effects of the religion which they professed, and came to preach. They did exhibit such gross vices, and such dissolute habits, as to be a disgrace to their country, and a scandal to their profession.

“The maintenance which you designed for these unworthy clergymen you so arranged, as to be a crushing, and a galling tax upon those who could derive no benefit in return, while you suffered the Protestant portion of the people to evade the burthen by a proceeding which was no better than a conspiracy; thus exciting contempt for the reformed religion, detestation of the clergy, and hatred of the laity. In order to exhibit your pretended zeal for the conversion of this race, after you so allowed them, for five generations, to be confirmed in their convictions, you enacted pains and penalties against them, so absurdly cruel, that they could not be inflicted upon people guilty of no other crime than rejecting doctrines propounded to them in a language which they could not understand, and by teachers whom they hated, and despised. Finding your penal laws ineffectual, you next, under pretence of teaching your language, and your religion to the infant children of these people, instituted nurseries, and chartered schools; and having got possession of a multitude of these children, you dealt with them so cruelly, and depraved them so shockingly, in these schools, as to make the children objects of pity and scorn, and the schools objects of raging detestation to the people. When this institution had been, for fifty years, exercising its withering effect upon the reformed religion, and furnishing to the Roman Catholic clergy a terrifying demonstration of God’s anger against those who had deserted their creed, the abuses, and atrocities practised in them were detected, and brought under your attention by Howard; but his remonstrance produced no useful effect; and they were continued, unreformed, and unmitigated, for a further term of forty years, during which time the unworthy race of Protestant clergy appointed by you had gradually died out, or had been effectually banished, by the growing force of moral and religious sentiment in the Protestant laity, and were succeeded by earnest and pious ministers, the opposite, in all respects, of their unworthy predecessors. When, at the end of ninety years, the charter-school scandal was so exposed by the candid commissioners appointed by yourselves, that you could no longer maintain it, in the face of their report, you set up a new institution, the first effect of which was to ruin three-fourths of the independent schools of the country, to which children of all creeds were freely resorting, and in which they associated, and thereby mitigated, and were rapidly forgetting their pre-existing antipathies. Those independent schools, by confining their attention to their proper business, and by refraining from all interference with religious convictions, or religious teaching,

obtained the confidence of all sects, and provoked the jealousy, or alarm of none. By your departure from this salutary principle, the schools which you substituted have become merely denominational; are a subject of strife, and angry sectarian controversy; and, with your permission, and by your acts, four thousand of them have fallen into the hands, and are subjected to the control of the clergy whose doctrines, for centuries, you pretended to condemn. Now that you, by the courses which you so pursued, have placed this hierarchy, which you formerly pretended to persecute, in a position of power and influence which, by that course of proceeding, you made it impossible for the Protestant clergy to attain; when the Protestant laity, notwithstanding all the difficulties which you have raised against them, have multiplied seven-fold, and notwithstanding your machinations, bear now a greater ratio than they formerly did to the Roman Catholics; when the Protestant clergy, for at least two generations, have been exemplary, and efficient teachers of a humane and liberal creed, breathing nothing but peace on earth, and good-will to all mankind; when the language in which they teach has become universal, and the language which they knew not has died away, and when some hope may be rationally entertained that the perfect toleration, which the Legislature granted, and a Protestant Government has established, would eventually produce universal tranquillity, you are now addressed by that hierarchy, which you pretended to condemn, but which, by your measures, you exalted; and called upon to abolish our Church; to confiscate its endowment; and to tell us, that our clergy, like those of other sects, must in future depend upon voluntary support; knowing, as you must know, that a clergy, independent of voluntary support, is of the essence of the Church to which we belong."

If it were not incredible, that a scheme of hypocritical treachery could be conceived, and persistently carried on for three hundred years, the Protestants of Ireland might be tempted to believe, that the English policy towards Ireland, in respect of religion, flowed from a resolution to prevent the Reformed faith from taking root in Ireland; and from a firm purpose to enable the Romish Hierarchy, as expressed by their bishops, to preserve, and guard the deposit of the Roman Catholic faith, in Ireland, until the storm raised by its abuses and intolerant cruelties had blown over, and from Ireland, as from a convenient base of polemical operations, to propagate, and re-establish the Popish religion, in England, by insidious agencies, and congenial ceremonies, and practices, ingeniously devised for the purpose.

Although it is clearly impossible, that any such design could have been formed, and treacherously acted on by a succession of rulers, for three hundred years, yet the measures adopted were entirely, although, no doubt, accidentally, consonant with such a design; and the present position of affairs, in the two Islands, is exactly what it would be, if such a scheme had been craftily formed, and successfully carried into execution.

The pretext for taking this last step of abolishing the Church (which must have the effect of establishing, and giving a crushing ascendancy to the Romish religion in Ireland, and of trampling upon the constitutional religion of the State), is the assumed tranquillizing effect of equality of religious rights. The constitution and laws, as they stand, at present, concede, equally to all subjects, the right to embrace any creed they please; the right to worship God, in any form which conscience may dictate or approve; the right to preach to others, within the limits of decency, and even beyond those limits, the doctrines which they themselves embrace; the right to seek, and to obtain, wealth, titles, and office, without restriction on the ground of creed—with the exception of the throne, and the few offices which ought not to be filled by any who are not of the religion to which the Sovereign is bound. To such an extreme is this concession of religious liberty and equality carried, that the Romish hierarchy, as of right, are allowed to teach, and to preach, and to publish and circulate, and by all the arts of persuasion, and threats of perdition, to propagate the doctrine of exclusive salvation; uncharitable, as it obviously is, towards the vast majority of the human race, and towards a large majority of British subjects, and their Sovereign. Holding this doctrine, and openly professing to teach, and effectually teaching, and inculcating this doctrine; repudiating, also, the spiritual authority of the Sovereign; and nominees as they are, of an alien power; it is not possible to conceive a *union* between them and the Sovereign, who is denounced by, but who is bound by the Constitution to repudiate, their intolerant doctrine. Being thus disqualified themselves from a State union with a Protestant throne, what right can they possibly have to say, that they will not tolerate a union between the Sovereign who fills that throne and the Church of which that Sovereign is the head, and to which that Sovereign, by belief, and conviction, belongs, and must belong? No property is set apart, and no State provision is made, for support of the Roman Catholic clergy, independently of their flocks; and they have publicly announced their resolution not to accept any such provision, if offered to them; thus absolutely prohibiting their own congregations

from having an independent clergy, even should those congregations desire it. The Protestant congregations, upon very intelligible social principles, think it expedient, if not absolutely necessary, to make an independent provision for their own clergy, and they have done so, by a legal and absolute grant and appropriation of property, adequate for that purpose. What imaginable right can the Romish hierarchy have to say that they will not tolerate this provision for the Protestant Church? Had the property granted by the Crown, at the Reformation, to support the clergy of the reformed Church, not been so granted, no one can doubt that the same property would have been granted to lay members of that reformed Church, or to some other uses in which neither the Romish clergy nor laity would have any participation. Had it been so granted away from the reformed Church, it would now be enjoyed by Protestant owners, or their representatives, or vendees, for private uses, as a large amount of the ecclesiastical property which fell to the Crown, at the Reformation, is now enjoyed, by virtue of grants made of it to private persons. A portion of the ecclesiastical property of the country was, however, granted for support of the reformed Church and clergy, in exoneration of the Protestant laity from the obligation of supporting their own clergy, and in conformity with that social principle which Protestants think a sound and rational precaution for the protection of liberty. To the present day, this property enures to the same uses for which it was so granted, and these are no other than uses beneficial to the Protestant laity of this country, by supporting for them their public worship and clergy, and to which benefit every one of the 700,000 Protestants of Ireland has as clear, and as indefeasible a right and title, as any of them, or any other British subject, has, or could have, to any property whatever.

By the theory of the Constitution, the Legislature has the power to confiscate this property, without any other than a moral obligation even to assign a reason for so doing. This theoretical power extends over all other property, as clearly as it does over this. It extends not only over the property, but over the life, of every British subject; and it has been exercised, and in savage times, brutally exercised, in taking away human life.

Had no property been granted by the Crown for support of an independent Protestant clergy; and had the Protestant laity (believing an independent clergy essential to freedom of conscience), by common contribution, at the Reformation, or at any subsequent time, purchased and conveyed to the Incumbents, and their successors, adequate pro-

erty for that purpose, the enjoyment of it now by the Protestant Church would palpably be the same grievance to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and laity, as they now complain of, and the Legislature would have the same power, and the same motive to remove that insulting grievance, as it now has to remove that which is alleged to exist. If the property which now supports the Protestant Church of Ireland be confiscated, by an act of legislative power—if the Protestant laity of Ireland, still believing that an independent clergy is an institution essential for the preservation of emancipated intellect, and civil liberty, should determine to purchase back this very property, when brought to sale, or property equivalent with what is now to be confiscated, and grant, irrevocably, this newly purchased property to the several Protestant Incumbents, and their successors, for ever, in precisely the same amounts as they now enjoy, the Protestants would, by this proceeding, continue the same insulting spectacle of a richly endowed Church in the view of the so-called poor clergy of the Irish people; and the right to complain of this, as a grievance, would be revived, and be just as good, or, more properly speaking, just as bad a right, and not one jot worse, than the present right to call for a legislative act of confiscation. The clergy of the State Church would not have to the property so purchased, and so conferred on them, any better title than they now have to the property vested in them (for no other or better title can be conferred, according to the British constitution). It would be a title to enure to them and their successors, not for ever, according to the terms of the grant, but only until the hour should come, and the man should come, when, and to whom, this Roman Catholic grievance should again offer a tempting opportunity of getting back to office, by a manœuvre supported by an eloquent denunciation of refractory Protestants, who had the audacity to counteract the tranquillizing policy of liberal leaders, by thus insisting upon having an independent Church, and clergy, enjoying an endowment offensive and insulting to Roman Catholic prelates and peers, whilst preaching a religion embraced only by a small minority of the people, and in opposition to the creed of the multitude. All the arguments which are now used for confiscating the present endowment of the Church would be equally applicable to such revived endowment. The Roman Catholic hierarchy would be as intolerant of that revived endowment as they are of the present. They never can, and they never will endure a State Church, or an endowed ministry, in any form—such a Church cannot coexist with their own, without being a restraint upon them. To remove this restraint is to

surrender freedom of conscience, and to deny the means of public worship to those who would secure to themselves, and to others, the enjoyment of this invaluable right. To say that the spectacle of a Protestant Church enjoying an endowment, and united with the Throne, is insulting to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, is a flimsy pretence, and perfectly transparent veil to cover their real design, and the true nature of their hostility to the Protestant Church and clergy. That Church, and that independent clergy, are an impediment, and an obstacle to the Romish clergy, in the attainment of despotic power, to the full extent of their ambition, over the minds of their own congregations. This is the grievance which they feel, and bitterly feel, and nothing but abolition of the Protestant religion can ever remove this grievance. The claim of equality is absurd. They have more than equality already; and the excess which they have is that which prompts their attack on the Protestant Church, when invited to it by a party impatient for office, and having no legitimate grounds of opposition to the existing Government.

The Roman Catholic clergy depend upon the voluntary contributions of their flocks for the temporal goods of this life; and their flocks, by their teaching, depend upon them for the eternal blessings of the life to come. The clergy are satisfied with the results of these reciprocal dependencies, and declare, that they will not accept a provision secured by the State, knowing that they now levy on the people subservient to them a much larger provision than Government could bestow. Protestants of the Church of England do not believe that any blessings in the life to come, in any degree, depend upon the will of their clergy. They expect from their clergy rational instruction, in the articles of religion; and they depend on them for a sound, and it must also be an intelligible interpretation of Holy Writ, tested by individual perusal, and consideration of that writ itself, and by the free use and exercise of private judgment. The article of purgatory; the utility of prayers, or masses for the dead—the obligation of confessing sins to the clergy—the belief that the clergy can forgive these sins, are all rejected by Protestants. The belief in these articles is the chief source of the power which the Roman Catholic clergy have over the minds of their congregations. Protestants reject, and repudiate these articles, because they can find no warrant for them in the Scriptures, and they regard them as socially mischievous. The admission of these articles by Roman Catholics, the repudiation of them by Protestants, constitute the essential difference between the two sects. The admission of them gives the

clergy a power over their congregations, which renders an independent provision unnecessary. The rejection of such doctrines makes an independent provision absolutely essential to the existence of the Protestant clergy.

Those who embraced this reformed faith, about three hundred years ago, being influenced by what they believed to be great abuses of clerical power over the human mind, which it was their intention and desire to correct, and, for the future, to prevent, determined to make a provision for the temporal wants of the clergy, independent of their flocks; and by this to remove all inducement to propagate doctrines by which to regain that influence, which had been so cruelly abused, during the dark ages, by their predecessors.

By the Reformation itself, property to a large amount became vested in the Crown, whose prerogative it was to determine the uses to which this property should in future be applied; and, in the lawful exercise of that prerogative, the Crown, out of this property, granted a large portion of that which now constitutes the independent provision for maintenance of the clergy, which was, and is, thought essential for their support. Once made, the Crown had no power to revoke this grant, and the property became absolutely vested in the incumbents and their successors, as compensation for public services, which they became bound to perform, for the benefit of the Protestant laity. The right, therefore, to this property is not the simple right of individual owners; it is a complex right, partly vested in the incumbent, and partly vested in his congregation. The clergyman's right to enjoy the property is no better, or clearer, than the right of every member of his congregation to have the religious duties of the parish efficiently performed by a competent, qualified incumbent; and the performance of these duties is a condition precedent to the right of the incumbent to enjoy the property. To confiscate this property, and sell it (which is the simple meaning of the more rhetorical phrase to capitalize it), and out of the price to pay to the incumbent the value of his life interest, leaving the spiritual duties to cease at the death of that incumbent, and thus ignoring the rights of the congregation, is plain and simple, and undisguised spoliation of these rights. To cover this spoliation by a pretext of reducing the Protestants to a level with other sects, who have no such rights, is palpable communism, and nothing else; and the same pretext will equally excuse the spoliation of any individual's property, in order to reduce him to a level with his poorer neighbour. If 700,000 energetic, and intelligent Protestants have no protection

against this abuse of the theoretical omnipotence of the three estates, it is hard to conceive how individuals can feel secure in the enjoyment of their rights and property.

I have demonstrated that the same power, by which the present endowment of the Church is confiscated, is equally potent to confiscate any new endowment, though provided by the Protestant laity, at their own expense. It follows, that this legislative act of confiscation is a legislative declaration that no endowed Church will be tolerated in Ireland. That no clergy independent of their flocks will be tolerated. That no congregations will be tolerated, who shall not be brought together by the preaching, and persuasion of clergy dependent on them for their bread, and able to overcome the strong motives by which the clergy of a different creed may be able to influence and make proselytes of them. The evils flowing from such contests of dependent clergy darken the history of every country in which they have existed.

Young gentlemen now enter the universities, and, at great expense of time, of labour, and of money, qualify themselves for the ministry, and for the high and dignified duty of instructing a congregation, claiming, and possessing the right of exercising private judgment, unfettered by dogmas exploded at the Reformation, and repudiated by men of emancipated intellect. The expectation of being ordained to the pastoral ministry of such congregations, and of being promoted to the independent benefices, and of rising to the dignities of an endowed Church, calls forth a very different class of men from those evoked by the voluntary system. It remains to be considered whether any men of this stamp will spend years of life, and of laborious study, on the chance of being able to collect a congregation, willing to pay for their services, but under no legal obligation to do so. This is to make a total change in the class and character of candidates for Holy Orders, and wholly to alter the relations between Protestants of the Church of England and their clergy—to abrogate the leading principles of the reformed religion, by destroying all means of preserving their purity from the corruptions necessarily incidental to the voluntary system.

By the peculiar circumstances in which the Roman Catholic hierarchy have exercised their influence in Ireland, as before historically related, they have acquired advantages and powers over the minds of their congregations, which other clergy, and especially the Protestant clergy of the English reformed Church, can have no possible chance of attaining. The proposed reduction of the Protestant clergy to what is

called equality with the Roman Catholic hierarchy, is nothing short of destroying the equality which exists, and prostrating them, and their congregations to be trampled out of existence, and what the rising generation, and the immediate posterity of the present Protestant congregations will become, no living man can foresee, if this change shall be made.

After the Protestant Church of Ireland, as a State Church, shall cease to exist—after its clergy shall cease to be endowed, the State and the Government must cease to have any right to direct, or control the education of candidates for holy orders. The Crown can no longer have a right to elect the bishops and clergy, no longer connected with it, or dependent on it for either maintenance or rank. Every congregation, having to pay its own pastor, must have the right of electing that pastor, uncontrolled by any other authority. Every member of the congregation who contributes to pay must have a right to vote in selecting the pastor to be so paid. At every vacancy, there must be a popular election; and the choice must be determined by the majority of votes. If no new law be enacted, to bind the minority by the decision of the majority (and it is impossible to conceive how such a law can exist), every election is almost sure to end in a severance of the congregation, and will drive the minority to find a new place of worship for themselves, and the pastor of their choice. The division and subdivision to which this plainly tends is without limit. The moment it is enacted that the Church of Ireland, as a State Church, shall no longer exist, that moment, it will cease to have an organised hierarchy. The present incumbents will be continued during their lives, in the enjoyment of their present emoluments, in affected respect for vested rights; but they will be the withering branches of a prostrate tree. Patrons will get the pecuniary value of advowsons, and the future right of presentation will cease. After the endowment of the bishoprics shall be confiscated, no one can imagine how bishops can any longer exist, and, without bishops, it is impossible to conceive how clergy for Protestant congregations can be ordained; that Protestants of the reformed religion can ever regard as a qualified pastor, according to the Articles of that religion, one who has never been ordained, is absolutely absurd. The Act demanded by the factious resolutions of the majority in the House of Commons will, therefore, be a legislative abolition of the religion, and public worship of 700,000 of the Irish people. How Protestants of the Church of England, after committing this act of tyranny upon the Irish Protestants, can have the face to assert that

the Episcopalian Church, in England, is an institution which they are entitled to maintain for themselves, passes my comprehension. The organised institution, now consisting of the Sovereign as a head, and the United Church of England and Ireland as a body, will not long survive the amputation of the Irish member. This operation will be but the commencement of confusion, the consequences, or termination of which no one can foresee.

This dismemberment of the organised, and United Church of England and Ireland is demanded by the Papal hierarchy, the avowed enemy of, what they designate, the English heresy, being themselves the most powerful organization for subduing the human mind, and the human race that ever was formed in the world. For this organization they claim entire exemption from the power and control of the English Sovereign, and English Legislature, and they have perfectly established that exemption. Being thus a distinct power, and assuming a defiant attitude, subjects as they profess to be, and are, of an alien potentate, their demand upon the British Legislature to dismember the United National Church Establishment is an undisguised insult to the Government of the British people, and no less an insult to the nation itself.

Those who opposed Emancipation argued, that any power conferred on Roman Catholics must pass into the hands of their clergy, and would be, by the clergy, used for intolerant purposes. Liberal Protestants derided this argument; but, to allay the fears of those who relied on it, (many of them with perfect sincerity) the oaths and pledges were devised, which were embodied in the Emancipation Act; and the chief object of these pledges was to protect the Protestant Church. The present attack upon this Church must recall the memories of those who were opposed to each other on that great question, and who still survive, to many a passionate assertion and denial of the danger of Catholic Emancipation to the Protestant religion in these countries. If the Church of Ireland be now disendowed, and cease to exist, as a State Church; then the Protestants who before, and up to the passing of the Emancipation Act, had the whole legislative power in their own hands, will, by an abuse of the perfect toleration which they voluntarily extended to all other creeds, become themselves the only proscribed sect, to whom no toleration is to be given; and their Church the only Church whose existence, in Ireland, is pronounced to be illegal.

Those who, in 1800, consented to an union of the Irish Crown with the English Crown—of the Irish Church (clergy and laity) with the English Church—of the Irish House of Lords with the English House of Lords—and of the Irish Commons with the English Commons, were

all Protestants of the reformed Church of England. However corrupt the motives were of some of those who so consented, it is perfectly certain, that many of them were impelled by an honest and sincere conviction, that the Union was a beneficial, if not an essential measure for the prosperity of both the nations. It is equally certain, that, however they condemn the corruption of those who consented, not from conviction, but from selfish motives, the Protestants of the present day (and I include all denominations of Protestants) are unanimous in believing that the Union is absolutely necessary to the well-being of both countries, and that it should be indissoluble. That some of the higher classes of Roman Catholics agree in this opinion may be assumed; but the Roman Catholic hierarchy have explicitly declared determined hostility to it. No one can doubt, that the millions (of whose subservience to the dictation of their clergy every election is a proof) agree with them, and entertain a blind and unreasoning hostility to the Union. The Fenian conspirators also agree with them; but confess a design to go farther than the Roman Catholic hierarchy profess a desire to go. This Fenian conspiracy has alarmed the public mind of England; and this fact is obvious, and known to every one. The alarm, in Ireland, is trifling, and local, and nothing is apprehended from the Fenian conspiracy, beyond a repetition of stealthy acts of outrage upon undefended property or life. The Roman Catholic clergy, and their dependent associates in agitation, have taken advantage of the alarm created, in England, by the novel commission of atrocities by a few of the Fenian conspirators there; and, for sinister purposes, they exaggerate the discontent in Ireland, extravagantly beyond the truth. By constantly harping on the grievances of former times, as if they still existed, they have struck the conscience of the English nation and have excited resentment against the living, for wrongs committed centuries ago upon generations which have long since passed away. Since 1829, many acts of great injustice to living Protestants have been done, in order to recompense living Roman Catholics for the penalties and disabilities imposed on those who are in the grave for more than a century, and with whom the living candidates for preferment have no other connexion than their communion with the Church of Rome. In the absence of all other grievances, the clergy especially attack the Union; and the Irish Church. The party who are out of office perceive, that the public mind of England has been wrought into anxiety to do some act of justice towards Ireland, by which to stop the agitation, and by which to preserve the Union, which nobody thinks of sacrificing to any

amount of clamour. The Irish Church is a conspicuous object. Next to a repeal of the Union, the fall of this Church, impediment as it is, in the way of the Romish Hierarchy towards clerical despotism, is the thing most desired by them. Irish discontent, both real and pretended, and even the treasonable conspiracy of the Fenians, are falsely attributed to the existence of this Establishment. The English public, by constant repetition of this unscrupulous assertion, have been misled into the belief, that the abolition of this institution will appease discontent, and tranquillize Ireland. That the Ministry now in office are not of this opinion, and therefore determined to uphold the Church, is a fact known to the Opposition, as also the fact, that a majority of the House of Commons, some from one motive, and some from another, are ready to sacrifice the Irish Church, and to throw it as a sop to the malcontents, believing that it is a prey eagerly pursued by them all, whether professing loyalty to England, or declaring open war against it. Here is presented a tempting opportunity of defeating the Ministry, on a resolution, that the Irish Church ought to be cast to the dogs. The public were last year amused by a witty picture, founded on the story of the mother, who, with her children, driving in the forest, was pursued by howling wolves, and to save herself, threw over her offspring, one by one, to delay the pack. All parties laughed at the humorous application of this dismal story to the abandonment of some favourite clauses in a reform bill, and the sacrifice provoked no censure or disapprobation from any. The heads of the Ministry were in no danger of being cloven, as that of the unfeeling mother was, by one of the indignant crowd to whom she related the cruel device by which she had saved her worthless life. Whether the Irish Church (with its 700,000 worshippers, intelligent, energetic, and attached as they are to that tolerant and rational institution, and having the sympathy, as they have, of an equal number of other Protestants, who are not blind to the prospect, that they may be the next sop for the wolves) can be thus cast to its pursuers, with a tranquillizing result, is an experiment yet to be tried; and tried at the risk of consequences to which men in the eager pursuit of office are very likely to be blind.

The English Government, in 1800, acting with the sanction and authority of the English people, courted a union with Ireland, then represented by an exclusively Protestant Parliament. The means by which those who then represented the Irish people were induced to form this Union, whether justifiable or not, were the means selected and used by the English Government. It lies not, therefore, in the

power of the English Government, or people, to say that the contract can be vitiated by the fraud which they themselves practised, if any such fraud existed. The long negotiations, the warm debates, and the great care at both sides applied, and the demands and concessions which took place, in settling the terms of this Union, all conclusively prove that it was a compact between two parties competent to make a binding contract. No solemnity necessary to its validity was omitted. The terms of it were stereotyped, and placed upon the statute books of both nations, and remain there, an indelible record, which to the end of time cannot be effaced. The Irish Church was then, as it is now, an endowed Church, ministered by a clergy with a provision independent of their congregations. The Protestant people of Ireland then prized, as they now prize, this independence of their clergy, as the most valuable attribute of the Church. The English people then enjoyed, and they now enjoy, the benefits of a Church whose clergy are, in like manner, supported. One article of the Union was, that these two Churches, which were then separate and distinct, should thenceforth be united. No language could be stronger, or more explicit than that used to express this article of the Union, then consented to by the representatives of the Irish people, viz., "That it be the fifth Article of the Union, that the Church of England and Ireland be united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called the United Church of England and Ireland, and that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the said united Church shall be and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by law established for the Church of England; and the continuance and preservation of the said united Church, as the Established Church of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental part of the Union."

The Protestants of Ireland were one of the high contracting parties to this national compact. Their consent was absolutely necessary, and there could have been no such compact without their consent. They still exist, as a perfectly distinct and definite body, enjoying the benefits of the united Church, with which their own previously separate and distinct Church was then united, upon the terms, that it should so remain united for ever, in order to preserve the doctrine, the worship, the discipline, and the government of both Churches under the name of the united Church; and as a security for the union of the Churches, it is, by the fifth article, most solemnly declared, that the Union of the kingdoms shall rest upon it, as a foundation (for this is the meaning of its

being a fundamental part of the Union), and that the union of the Churches shall be, and for ever, essential, to the union of the Kingdoms; that is—no union of the Churches, then no union of the Kingdoms. Upon these explicit terms, and upon these alone, the Protestants of Ireland consented, that the Legislature of Ireland (the whole power of which then belonged to themselves) should be merged in the Legislature of the United Kingdom. The day after the compact was completed, and solemnly placed on record, all the powers, which now, at the end of sixty-eight years, belong to the united Legislature, then, and immediately, belonged to it. The united Legislature has not now one shadow of right to violate any article of the Union, which it had not the day after those articles were agreed to and recorded. It then had the same *power* also to violate those articles which it now has.

Suppose in 1800, and immediately after the English King, Lords, and Commons had induced the Irish Protestants, thus to merge their own Legislature, and to trust to the honour and good faith of the great English nation, that nation proceeded to do what it is now solicited to do, can it be doubted, that everlasting infamy amongst the nations of the earth would be the price at which England would then have purchased the benefit, or the advantage, or whatever else they may call it, of violating this fifth article of their compact with the Protestants of Ireland. The Protestants of Ireland had then, by the laws of the land, the whole power of the Irish nation; and that power was, by representation, placed in the two Houses of Parliament, which, by the compact of the Union, were dissolved. It is by asserting, that the whole power of the Irish nation was so vested in the Protestant Houses of the Irish Parliament, that England can sustain the legal validity of the Union. If England, the day after the Act of Union was made perfect, had, by an Act of the united Legislature, violated the fifth article, and enacted that the Church of Ireland should not only be no longer united to the Church of England, but that it should no longer exist, as a State Church, that it should no longer possess an endowment, that the property which had been legally and for ever granted to its clergy, for their support, independently of their congregations, should be confiscated, and revested in the Crown, for some other undefined uses—that the Protestant congregations, for whose religious wants and worship this property had been so granted to their clergy, must bestir themselves, and consider how their clergy were to be in future maintained, if they chose to have clergy at all; or if they chose to have religious worship at all; can it be in the least doubted, that the two Houses of the Irish

Parliament would have been, by this shameless violation of a fundamental, and an essential article of the Union compact, *ipso facto*, revived, and restored to all their pre-existing rights and powers? Can it be doubted, that if they had the power, they would also have the unquestionable right to appeal to the last resort for the redress of national wrongs?

If such would have been the consequences of violating this fundamental article of the Union compact, the day after it was made, is there any warrant of reason or justice for now violating it, after being acquiesced in, and acted on, for sixty-eight years? The high contracting parties (as such parties call themselves) are still in full, and distinct existence; and the Irish party has done no act to forfeit, or vary, its right to insist on the faithful observance of the fundamental, and essential articles of the Union compact. That compact, so far from being invalidated, or in the least weakened by time, is, in all sense and reason, to be considered as corroborated by time. The unquestioned enjoyment of the Church endowment, continued for sixty-eight years, in addition to more than two hundred years before, adds incalculable force to the stipulation in the Union compact, by which the title to this property was declared to be for ever inviolable.

The sophism by which the confiscation of the Church endowment, and the severance of the Irish Church from the Crown, are concluded to be within the legitimate powers of the United Parliament, may be thus fairly stated :—No act of one Parliament can bind future Parliaments, or take away from them the power of repeal. The Act of Union is an Act of Parliament, and, therefore, cannot take away from the present Parliament the right to repeal it. The fallacy of this syllogism is in the minor premiss. The Act of Union is not an Act of Parliament, in the sense which would support the conclusion. It was not an Act of one Parliament; it was a national compact made between two Parliaments, of two distinct nations. It was a compact made upon valuable considerations, reciprocally passing from each nation to the other. If both these Parliaments were still in existence, they would have the power, by common consent of both, to rescind the compact which they had made, upon the principle, that the same power which makes a compact may also unmake it; and this is the principle upon which one Parliament can repeal the Acts of a previous Parliament; because it has the same power, and the same authority, as the Parliament had which made the Act. The Union compact was not an Act of the United Parliament, which had no existence at the time that compact was made.

The United Parliament derives its existence from the Union compact; and it has no legitimate power to alter any of the articles of that compact, except what the contracting Parliaments concurred in giving it, and expressed in the record by which the common will and intention of both was perpetuated, and the benefits of the contract for ever secured to the several parties to it. So far from conferring on the future United Parliament any power to rescind, or alter any terms of their mutual agreement, they both concurred in the most explicit and solemn declaration, that no such power should exist. The assumption of such a power, in violation of this express prohibition, is so clear and palpable an usurpation, that I find it as impossible to prove it, as to prove any other self-evident proposition. I have suggested, by way of test, the question, whether it was competent to the newly created Parliament of the United Kingdom, on the first day of its existence, to violate all the essential and fundamental terms of the compact which had brought itself into existence, and by which it was solemnly bound to forbear from so violating one iota of those terms. If it could not lawfully do so, on the first day, it lies on those who assert that it can lawfully do it now, to point out the time when, and the means by which, it acquired this lawful power.

The English people are annoyed, and irritated by Irish agitation and discontent. They are alarmed by Fenian atrocities committed even in England, and by bold, and constantly repeated assertions they have been persuaded that the severance, and disendowment of the Irish Church will produce the peace and quiet which they are desirous to have. Are peace and quiet, more than any other benefits, to be purchased at the expense of national faith, and by a dishonourable violation of contract? If it be right, and lawful, and honest, for the English people, to purchase peace and quiet by abolishing the religion, by confiscating the property, and by trampling upon the vested rights of 700,000 Irish Protestants, no one can see why the same reasoning may not make it right, and lawful, and honest to kill these Protestants, that England may be no longer troubled by the controversies between them and the Roman Catholic priests.

If perfect tranquillity were the certain effect of the wrong now threatened to the Protestants of Ireland, this result would not justify the infliction of that wrong. Those who expect tranquillity from a measure which inflicts, not only injury, but insult upon a numerous and sensitive body of the nation, must assume that the people so treated are devoid of self-respect, and exempt from human passions and frailties;

or else that they are powerless, and that, therefore, it is safe to trample on them, however base and infamous it may be to do so.

But it is difficult to account for the existence of such a notion, as that tranquillity, in Ireland, can possibly be the effect of abolishing the Church. The Roman Catholic clergy have given express notice, that, although they approve of this measure, and will condescend to accept it, as part payment of what they claim for Ireland, yet that they have no intention of resting satisfied with it, and that nothing short of repealing the Union will tranquillize them, or those of the Irish people over whom they have the power of agitation. That abolition of the Church can have the least effect in breaking up the Fenian conspiracy no one has been so absurd as to assert. The great body even of the Roman Catholic people are taking no part in the outcry against the Church. Although a number of Roman Catholic peers and gentlemen were stirred up to sign a meagre resolution, that they considered the Church to be a grievance, they apologized for this step towards agitation by declaring that they were stimulated to it by an assertion, which had been made by some parties, that they did not consider it a grievance.* The abolition of the Church will therefore give cause of exultation to the Romish clergy (and they are already exulting). It will be received with dignified approbation by the peers and gentlemen who signed the resolution. The general body of the Catholic people will look upon it as a triumph of their clergy, and it will wonderfully increase their readiness to join these leaders in further agitation for that undefined blessing called justice for Ireland. These are the several classes upon which it is desired to produce a tranquillizing effect. The Protestants of all denominations were already perfectly tranquil, and nothing more was required, but to leave them quietly attentive to the business of life, of which, in Ireland, they are the principal conductors. The agitation carried on by the Romish clergy consists in speeches, pastoral addresses, and other compositions put into print, and sent to England and elsewhere, to make ignorant foreigners think that Ireland is in a state of insurrection, to which it is goaded by oppression and misgovernment, as these agitators mendaciously allege. The sound and intelligent portion of the Irish people, by whose labour and devotion to their

* Since the publication of the first edition of this book, I have been informed, that some Roman Catholic gentlemen of the highest respectability, when solicited to sign this declaration, peremptorily refused, on the ground that they did not feel the Protestant Church a grievance, and did not desire to have it abolished.

several duties the country has advanced, and is advancing, in spite of all impediments, look with indignation on the effect upon foreigners, and people in England of these scandalous publications, and with the utmost contempt upon their effect at home. They know, that the power of these agitators, for any other mischief, than that of slandering the nation abroad, is despicable. They never apprehended any serious injury from it at home, until this attack upon the Protestant Church, produced by it, has suddenly alarmed them. Now they are agitated, necessarily agitated; and this agitation is the first taste which England gets of the tranquillity which the disendowment of the Church is quite certain to produce. The agitation which the threat to destroy the Church has caused is not founded upon, or excited by ambition, or the desire of power, civil or ecclesiastical, or of any speculative benefits. It springs from alarm for their altars and their hearths. The feeling of resentment and indignation universally existing in the minds of all Protestants, who have not sold their birthright to the Romish hierarchy for a mess of pottage, or a seat in Parliament, is, as yet, a suppressed and silent feeling, with few exceptions. Nine-tenths of the people affected with it have the most unconquerable dislike to participation in public demonstrations; and such demonstrations will, therefore, be an inadequate measure of the discontent which this attack upon their religion and worship will certainly produce. That this pretended remedy for agitation in Ireland will stimulate and increase that which before existed, I have no doubt: that it will drive the hitherto most peaceable and orderly part of the people to agitate for, and in defence of their invaded rights, is already manifest; but what may be the duration, the extent, and exact character of this reluctant agitation, or the ultimate consequences of rousing this peaceful, but determined, and earnest body of men, I do not venture to conjecture, and I do not believe it possible to foresee.

If the Protestants of England, Scotland, and Ireland clearly see, and correctly estimate the inevitable tendency, and certain effects of demolishing the Church of Ireland, in the way proposed, they have before them a plain course by which to prevent the calamitous consequences of a rash proceeding, hastily adopted, for party purposes, and entered upon for the recovery of place, without regard to ulterior consequences. The first success of this manœuvre, which alarms the Protestants, affords them the most obvious means of defeating it. Had the design of destroying the Protestant Church been concealed, until a new House of Commons should be elected, 330 determined enemies of

that Church would have gone to the poll undetected, and would have seats in the new Parliament, with ample time and opportunity for accomplishing their purpose. Now their designs are known, and if the same men shall be returned to the reformed House by the Protestant constituencies of England, the conclusion will be inevitable, that the Protestants of England are determined to crush the Protestants of Ireland, and to deprive them of the means of public worship, according to conscience, and according to the reformed religion of England and Ireland. This will demonstrate that an entire revolution has taken place in the religious feelings and convictions of the English nation, and the event must be accepted, for good or for evil.

When James the Second, and the Popish clergy of that time, were plotting against the Protestants of England, they committed a mistake, and rashly exposed their designs, and thereby afforded to their intended victims an opportunity of defeating them. Had the seven bishops been convicted, and had the Protestants of England accepted, and applauded the conviction, as they are now called on to applaud the ruin of the Irish Church, no one can doubt, that the horrors of Mary's reign would have been renewed; and the reformed religion must have been stamped out, by persecution, or preserved by civil war of a character much more sanguinary than that by which the Revolution was accomplished. The English people, however, perceived, and pursued the safe and sensible course—the bishops were acquitted; and the acquittal was hailed with such a storm of enthusiasm, as to terrify the conspirators, and to scare their unhappy bigot into exile. It might be truly said of them, “*quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*” Had the English people been so demented, as to reject the right, and adopt the wrong course, at that crisis of their affairs, the same observation would have become applicable to *them*, and triumph would have been on the side of the bigots. But fortunately for the cause of civil liberty, the people were not demented; the bigots were; and an age of persecution was avoided. Whether the events shall prove that the assailants of the Church, in the present Parliament, are demented, in rashly pressing their crude, and, for every practical purpose, abortive resolutions, and thereby segregating, and conveniently for those who would preserve their rights and liberties, marking the enemies of those rights and liberties; or whether the electors of England and Ireland shall prove to be the demented parties, cannot be known, until after the first elections under the Reform Act. That the present position of the country is analogous to its position, in the reign of James II., is plain enough to any one who knows Ireland now, and who has even a moderate amount

of historic information of that critical time, when the seven bishops were acquitted, and English liberty was established.

The reform Bill for England having occupied the last Session of Parliament, there was a general anticipation that the present Session would be principally devoted to the discussion, and redress of Irish grievances. The law of landlord and tenant; the system of national education; the want of a Roman Catholic University; and the existence of a Protestant State Church, appeared to be the chief topics of complaint; and were made the subject of publications by which to create in the public mind a desire for extensive innovations. The English people derive their notions of the State of Ireland from such publications, from newspapers, and from reported speeches in Parliament. It is difficult entirely to disbelieve what appears in print, especially when the writer gives his name. English readers have no means of detecting misrepresentations of Ireland, many of which pass without contradiction; and even when contradicted, it is often difficult to see at which side the truth lies. Special legislation for Ireland, when called for by one party, is generally opposed by another; and English legislators are embarrassed by the contradictory statements which they constantly hear from men whose veracity ought to be unquestionable. The Irish members, who are about one-sixth of the House of Commons, are divided into three distinct parties, viz., a Conservative party, a Whig party, and a Roman Catholic party. The two first represent the Protestant interest, which is, therefore, divided, and becomes a neutral quantity, in the contests between the two great English parties. The members of the third party are dependent for their seats on the Roman Catholic clergy, and must vote together, upon every question in which these are interested. Thus united, they are a compacted body, and are not addicted to either Whigs, or Tories. Evenly divided, as these two great parties frequently are, the representatives of the Romish clergy can sometimes determine the fate of a ministry. No other constituency in the country at all resembles that which consists solely of the Romish hierarchy. All others are, more or less, divided; very much less attentive to the votes of their representatives; and more oblivious of occasional backslidings, even when they observe them. No one dependent for his seat on this clerical constituency can, in one iota, swerve from his allegiance to them, and have any hope of being again elected. This united, and decisive body of members are therefore of vital importance to the party who can attach them, and this can be done, only by unqualified subservience to the

views and designs of the Romish hierarchy. This hierarchy is an organization, distinguished from all others that ever existed in the world. The members of it are multitudinous in every part of the globe: they are, by celibacy, separated from the rest of the human race: the power of the order is the title of each individual to consideration and rank in society: to propagate that power is, therefore, the chief object of personal ambition. Centred, as this power is, in an absolute head, elected from the body, and chosen for his ability, and for his devotion to the order, it can be wielded with almost irresistible force; and must ever be formidable to those who deny its authority. To subdue the minds of men, and secure absolute dominion over them, is the great aim and purpose of the organization, and the means used are always skilfully adapted to the end, and modified according to the season, and the circumstances. This body has perpetual succession, and must last to the end of time; the tenor of its existence is uniform, and its functions and character unchangeable: no future object is, therefore, so remote—no means of attaining it so dilatory, as to damp its ambition, or to slacken its exertion. When activity is dangerous, or useless, patience and affected indifference come easy to it, and “abide the time” is then its maxim.

England is the greatest nation which has freed itself from the thralldom of this formidable power; its emancipation was effected by a complication and extraordinary combination of causes, some of which, for ages, operated as a traditional stimulus to vigilance, in guarding the freedom that was obtained; and the cry of “No Popery,” now so frequently derided, was a traditional watchword, which, to many generations, had an important significance. When this watchword means hostility, ill will, or harm of any kind to Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, it is a vicious and wicked suggestion: in this wicked sense it was the cry of a maniac, in the last century, and produced some lamentable, although only momentary effects. When it expresses aversion, and hostility to priest-power, it is a true, and salutary exhortation to vigilance, in the preservation of civil and religious liberty; and it is the traditional exponent of fears, which were the effect of the savage persecutions inflicted upon the people by that power, when it had the arm of the secular Sovereign under its command.

The Church of England is the great bulwark, and fortification of the national mind, and its reasoning guard and shield against the machinations of the Romish hierarchy. The prostration of that Church will be the sure and certain admission of the never dying, and ever vigilant

enemy of human liberty. This was the opinion of the great men who laid the firm foundations of English freedom, at the Revolution, and then confirmed the union between the Crown and the Church. The cry of "the Church is in danger" is a traditional watchword derived from that opinion. Let that watchword not be derided, when the spurious Whigs of the present day call upon the English nation to tear down an outwork, and a most important, and firmly attached member of that great guardian of religious liberty, and freedom of conscience, which the true Whig party of the seventeenth century erected and transmitted, I hope, with sufficient stability to withstand the assaults of their unworthy successors of the nineteenth century. Alarm for the safety of the Church is sneered at by its enemies, and their sneers must import either that no danger exists, and that the alarm is, therefore, groundless and ridiculous; or that the Church is an institution obviously useless, and that anxiety for the preservation of it is, therefore, puerile and absurd. Before this attack upon the Irish Church, none of its derisive enemies ever dared to insinuate, that his derision imported, that the State Church was an useless, or an unnecessary institution; and his sneers at the alarm of its supporters were, therefore, founded on an implied assertion, that the notion of danger was a childish delusion. When the alarm is for the safety of the English Church, this will still be the explanation of the sneers. But anxiety for the safety of the Irish Church is now, and for the first time, derided, on the express assertion that the Irish Church is not only useless, but mischievous, and so obviously monstrous an establishment, that all anxiety for its preservation is ridiculous, and efforts to uphold it absurd. If the friends of the English Church say it is in danger, when the Irish Church is assailed, their alarm is derided, still upon the assumption that it is obviously groundless; and the abolitionists indignantly protest, that, while they are demolishing the Irish institution, they feel the most profound reverence and respect for that of England. These are the protestations of men whose former professions of unalterable respect for the Irish Church are still ringing in our ears, while they are openly assailing its existence.

When these same men were seeking to be exonerated from the oaths by which they were required to deny all designs against the Church, their argument was, that the oaths were useless, because no such designs existed—that the oaths were offensive and insulting, because they imputed the propensity to such designs, and threw doubt upon the honourable adherence of emancipated Catholics to the promises upon

which Emancipation was granted. They have scarcely been relieved from the pressure of these oaths, be that pressure more or less, when they do the very thing which those who took the oaths swore they would not do. The speeches which they now make against the existence of the Church are a striking demonstration of the hypocrisy of their reasoning for abolition of the protecting oaths.

If the people of England can be blind to the danger which now besets them, in this factitious crisis, the calculations of the Romish hierarchy may justly be considered as well founded; and a counter-reformation, whether for good or for evil, may be rationally apprehended as a coming event, which those who most dread it must be prepared to accept.

That certain constituencies in Ireland are now under the absolute control of the Roman Catholic clergy, and must return the nominees of these clergy, is a conspicuous fact, which there has been no effort to conceal. That these nominees are now in alliance with the Whigs who are struggling for office is equally clear. In the House of Commons there are some who are equally hostile to both the English and Irish Churches, and also to the Romish Church. These are willing to attack the objects of their hostility in detail, and therefore have no objection to begin with the Irish Church, and consider the abolition of that as a step in advance towards an attack on the English Church. Although they detest Popery, they do not appreciate the State Church as a protection against it. In this political article, they differ from the supporters of the Church. They enjoy the toleration extended to all Dissenters, but they give no credit, or thanks for it to the Protestants, or to their Church. There are others in the House who are tired, and disgusted with Irish agitation, and feel also some alarm at the audacity of the Fenians, who have had the boldness to commit some atrocities in England. Although these are attached to the English Church, and would not join in any attack upon it, they have been, by the calumnies on the Irish Institution, brought to believe that it is a mission which has failed; that it is a Church without a congregation; that it is alien to, and an insult on the Irish people (thus assuming that the Roman Catholics are the Irish people); that, in good conscience, England owes some signal act of justice to Ireland, in compensation for past misrule; and that no act of justice will cost her less trouble, or less expense than the demolition of the Irish State Church. On the principle, that what men wish they easily believe, they have been persuaded, that the sacrifice of the Church will tranquillize Ireland; and, with these feelings

and views, they join in the assault, and swell the majority against the Irish Church. The least true knowledge of Ireland—a bare view of the congregations which assemble in the Irish churches—the least acquaintance with the real causes of agitation, and the true nature of the discontent in Ireland, would be sufficient to dispel the delusions of this section of the majority, and to convince them of the gross injustice, and the absolute futility of sacrificing this religious Establishment, as a means of appeasing an agitation, kept up by the Romish clergy; and which has much more important ulterior objects than the destruction of the Irish Church; an Institution which is assailed, solely because it is an obstacle to the attainment of those ulterior objects.

The Whig party make up the residue of the majority, being much the most numerous part of it. The movement is entirely theirs, and is nothing but a manoeuvre for office; and the result, whether victory or defeat, will be theirs also. If the final result shall be victory, the Conservative Ministry will no longer be an obstacle to the Whigs; and the Irish Church will cease to be an impediment in the way of the Romish hierarchy, when proceeding to obtain power to enforce that imperative obligation, under which their Catechism declares, that all men are, of belonging to what they pronounce to be the only true Church.

Into the councils of the Jesuit party which led to the prosecution of the seven bishops in 1868, the master mind of his generation, then Prime Minister, who was, by his public profession, a Protestant, was admitted; and he took the part of leader in the measures which brought on the Revolution. His singular abilities qualified him for that post, and he was too much of a statesman to allow his religion to stand in the way of his ambition. The adulation and art with which Sunderland ascribed to his royal master all the merit of reasoning him out of his Protestant heresy, and into the only true Church, by convincing him of the impossibility of finding salvation out of it, is described by Macaulay with a power peculiar to his pen. The persecution of the Church in the prosecution of seven of its bishops, was preceded by the grotesque exhibition of the Prime Minister of England, taper in hand, and feet bare, knocking at the door of the Chapel Royal, humbly supplicating for admittance, as a poor and repentant sinner, who had gone astray, but who, by his royal master, had been brought back to the fold. The persecution of the Irish Church has not been *preceded* by such a touching ceremony, but whether the fall of that Church, and the ghostly reasoning of the Romish clergy may not convert a Prime

Minister of England, and in due time reproduce the scene of 1688, is a thing which time alone can determine. Such a scene was not for the first time exhibited in the reign of James II. ; a still more remarkable manifestation of the national conversion and repentance had been made in the reign of Mary, both in England and in Ireland, and a full description of it, as it took place in Ireland, is to be found in the Act 3 & 4 Philip and Mary, Chapter 8, where it is recorded that the Irish Chancellor, "devoutly, and right reverently, received the Pope's Bull ; and, upon his knees, to the good example of all others," in open Parliament, deliberately and distinctly, in a high voice, read the same to the Lords and Commons kneeling on their knees, "being repentant, for declaration of their repentance." In which posture the reading of the Latin Bull must have kept them for an hour, judging from the length of it.

The notion of tranquillizing the Romish clergy of Ireland, or of stopping their agitation by concessions, until the nation kneels to receive the Pope's Bull, and Condonation of the heresy which is now assailed, is perfectly visionary. Destruction of the State Church is but a step towards repeal of the Union ; and repeal of the Union will be but a step towards a counter-reformation ; and for the means of conjecturing what that will lead to, I refer all readers to the history of Philip and Mary's reign, and to that of James II. : and to guard against any prejudiced, or Protestant account of those times, I will be satisfied with that of the Rev. Roman Catholic Doctor Lingard.

The sixth chapter of the book assumes, for a title, the question "What is to be done with Ireland?" This question was, with ill disguised insolence towards this country, made the opening sentence of a pamphlet published shortly before the meeting of the Session, in which it was expected, that Irish discontent would be the leading topic in the house. In the sixth chapter, I have endeavoured to give what I believe to be the true answer to this question ; and some observations on the subject of the Irish Church occur in different parts of it. At page 273-6 the following occurs :—

Unacquainted, as the English people are, with the real causes of Irish poverty, they have been brought to believe that it is the effect of misrule ; and they take blame to themselves for having permitted this cause to exist. The misrule and oppressions, thus admitted, are all ascribed to the English faction, which formerly existed in Ireland, and abused the powers confided to them. This English faction were Protestants, and it is easy to assert that this Protestant faction still exists.

There is no difficulty in thus persuading the English people and public to lay all the blame of the misrule which now touches their conscience upon the Irish Protestants of the present time. The remorse of the English people is thus turned into resentment against the Irish Protestants; and the national conscience of England must be relieved by doing some signal act of justice to the oppressed Irish. That the oppressed Irish were formerly the Roman Catholics of Ireland appears a self-evident proposition; and, by the same process of reasoning which has brought the blame of the oppressions inflicted in past times upon the present generation of Protestants, the title to redress is derived to the existing Roman Catholics, and the signal act of justice is, therefore, assumed to be due to them.

When it is considered that, of the oldest Irish Protestants now living, a large majority long, and at last successfully, exerted all their power and influence to emancipate the Roman Catholics—that of the Protestant opponents of that measure who still survive there are very few, if any, who have not long since changed their opinion, and approved of that act of justice—when it is considered, that, for at least forty years, no Protestants of Ireland, old or young, have been guilty of the smallest act of oppression to Roman Catholics—that no oppression, or disability, or other wrong, has been inflicted upon Roman Catholics, by any party whatever, for the last forty years—that of Government patronage, during that long time, much more than was justly due to them has been exercised in favour of Roman Catholics, in affected consideration of ancient injustice to past generations—nothing can be more grossly, or more palpably unjust and oppressive, in the face of these facts, than to spoliage the property and rights of Irish living Protestants, and to call this spoliage and oppression an act of justice towards Ireland. To suggest this act of injustice, in the shape of special legislation for Ireland, is not answering the question, “What is to be done with Ireland?” upon a candid, a wise, an honest, or a prudent consideration of the present condition, and the existing circumstances of the country.

If the English colonists who settled in Ireland, and who at the Reformation became the Protestants of Ireland, were now living, and on their trial for the oppressions which they are alleged to have inflicted on the Irish race, the English nation is estopped from being their accusers. They came here, as the soldiers and servants of the English Crown, and English nation, and in this country, acted upon the authority of English rulers, and in execution of commands which it was their duty to obey.

They were sent to subdue Ireland, to gratify English ambition—a mission not to be executed by gentle means. The final result has been the annexation of Ireland to the English nation and Throne; and if responsibility for the violence and oppressions by which this final result was accomplished attaches anywhere, it must attach upon the English nation itself, and not upon the Protestant part of the Irish people. But to talk of responsibility now for the violence of past times, and of redressing the injuries inflicted in past centuries; to make a show of rendering compensating justice now to the supposed injured race, at the expense of the present generation of those assumed to be the dominant party, is the highest degree, not only of injustice, but of folly and absurdity; and any suggestion of it by those in power cannot be made, without the danger of throwing society back into confusion and sanguinary strife.

Ireland being now a part of the United Kingdom, and fully entitled to the benefit of the English Constitution, and English laws, nothing can be more obvious than that the proper mode of dealing with it is to treat it as part of the English nation. To enact laws for it which the English people repudiate for themselves is to deny to it the benefits of the union with England. The allegation that exceptional legislation is required, by special circumstances, which are stated to exist in Ireland, is not supported by any credible evidence whatever, and is contradicted by the policy and the practice of three centuries.

Those who are attracted by the seeming fairness of leaving every congregation to support their own clergy, should learn how this voluntary system has worked, and what are its fruits, in the States of America. Of this, no better illustration can be given than the sect of Mormons, who adopted the brutish, and brutalizing principle of polygamy; and with it also adopted a Scriptural principle, that, “work is worship”—another form of expressing that, “in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” By their polygamy, they scandalized the fanatics of the other sects, who surrounded their first settlement; by their devout, and devoted toil, the Mormons had made for themselves an Eden in the wilderness. The polygamy taught by their apostle, who was an offspring of the voluntary system, provoked the intolerance of their fanatic neighbours, whose intolerance sprung from the same parent; and they were, by pitiless violence, driven, in the depth of an American winter, from the homes which they had built, and the fields and gardens which they had toiled to cultivate. Aged men and women, infants and mothers—the whole nation of them were driven at the point of the sword, with no provision but the clothes which they wore, to face the desert,

and travel hundreds of miles, in cold and hunger, to look for a new settlement, in a wild so dreary, that even the savage Indians abhorred, and deserted it. There they had nothing to contend with but the natural sterility of a waste deserted by all other living creatures. Notwithstanding their brutish domestic principle, the dogma that work is worship subdued the barren earth, and a new Eden spread and gradually expanded over a wild where no animal had lived, no plant had grown. Far remote from the habitations of all other human beings, they were not observed, and escaped persecution; until, having subdued the earth, they had increased and multiplied, and replenished what they had subdued. Now again, when discovered, they are objects of furious detestation to the fanatics of other creeds, who thirst for their blood, and would sweep them from the Earth, but for 20,000 rifles in the hands of resolute fighting Mormons.

Polygamy is but one of the multitude of absurd and even loathsome religious vagaries which have sprung from the voluntary system, to plague society in the Western World. The merciless fury and fanaticism of other sects, from which each has to defend itself at the point of the bayonet, is another offspring of the same system. Let those who war against a State Church, who would spoliage the endowment of an independent clergy, reflect that where there are as many absurd creeds as there are raving fanatics, and where these are as numerous as the stars, there is no State Church, and every congregation supports its preacher. Let the English people, who are now invited to force this system upon the Irish nation, compare the toleration, and state of religious feeling in England, various or even conflicting as it is, with that which pervades every nation in which there is no moderator, in the institution of an established State Church, and where all the preachers are made dependent on the influence which they can exercise over the minds of those who listen to them, and they must be sensible of the grave injury which they are prompted to inflict on this country, in violation of their solemn compact with the Protestants of Ireland.

When the important question at the head of this sixth chapter comes to be calmly discussed by legislators, who shall entertain benevolent intentions towards Ireland, there may be found in this attempt to answer it something not wholly unworthy of attention, and the small book from which this pamphlet is taken may be deemed entitled to a full perusal.

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